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# The Wordsworth-Coleridge Combination

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July-September, 1923

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# THE SEWANEE REVIEW

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[No. 3

## YOU WHO SCORN BEAUTY (TO CERTAIN ARTIFICERS)

You who scorn beauty,—have you dared to scorn  
Stars, and the witchery of the moon's white face,  
The sunset call of thrushes, and the grace  
Of the young rose, that queens it from her thorn?  
These are God's smiles, perpetually re-born,  
Like changing sparkles in a starry place;  
But you go seeking, through the desolate space,  
Eyes of dark spirits, haunted and forlorn.

Since you have chosen to worship hideous things,  
And twist God's image into shapes of hell,  
You feel the throbbing of your own lost wings  
In the bright air where singing angels dwell.  
You who scorn beauty at the last shall find  
That scorn of God shall leave you mad and blind.

MARION COUTHOUY SMITH.

New York.

## THE WORDSWORTH-COLERIDGE COMBINATION

We have from the pen of Dorothy Wordsworth two pictures of Samuel Taylor Coleridge of which one might be called Promise and the other Disappointment. In the former she writes from Racedown, in June, 1797, not long after the eventful day when she and her brother and that third person who with them was to be "one soul" came together for the first time.

"He is a wonderful man. His conversation teems with soul, mirth, and spirit. Then he is so benevolent, so good tempered and cheerful, and—like William—interests himself so much about every little trifle. At first I thought him very plain—that is, for about three minutes. He is pale and thin, has a wide mouth, thick lips, and not very good teeth, longish, loose-growing, half-curling, rough, black hair. But if you hear him speak for five minutes you think no more of them. His eye is large and full, not dark but grey; such an eye as would receive from a heavy soul the dullest expression, but it speaks every emotion of his animated mind. It has more of the 'poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling' than I ever witnessed."

This is very girlish, no doubt; the writer dwells with feminine fondness upon external appearance. But her glance goes deep, too; she perceives Coleridge's three never-failing qualities, the kindness or essential goodness of his nature, the magic of his tongue, and the engaging freedom with which he gave his heart away. He, for his part, during this same visit, wrote to Joseph Cottle, the young Bristol printer who had the courage and insight to become the publisher of Southey, Coleridge, and Wordsworth:—

"Wordsworth admires my tragedy, which gives me great hopes. Wordsworth has written a tragedy himself. I speak with heartfelt sincerity and (I think) unblinded judgment, when I tell you that I feel myself *a little man by his side*."

It is almost certain that Coleridge and William Wordsworth had met before, some time in the preceding two years; but not until the day at Racedown when they and Dorothy all three came



together did there begin that intimacy and collaboration to which are due in large part the best poetry that the two men composed. Nearly all of it fell within the next ten years, nearly every memorable line of Coleridge's and by far the best of Wordsworth's. Throughout these ten years they either worked together, with Dorothy close at hand, or, if separated, worked each with his mind upon his friend, as much affected by the subtle authority of an absent but revered personality as by the suggestions of a living presence.

The other picture was put together slowly and painfully in a long letter dated November 6, 1806. After an absence of several years, in which Coleridge had tried to escape from his responsibilities and opportunities, from the hampering solicitude of his friends, from the promptings and reproaches of his own genius, he had at last reappeared in England and had been induced to meet the Wordsworths at Kendal. They meanwhile had hungered for a sight of him, fearing lest he might kill himself in some obscure foreign hole, and knowing full well by this time that he was a confirmed opium-eater. He had not yet seen the latter half of the great poem, the poem *to him* which Wordsworth had begun in happier days. He was at Kendal, cowering at an inn, dreading to meet his friends; and after some delay he sent for William. Dorothy writes:—

"We all went thither to him, and never, never, did I feel such a shock as at first sight of him. We all felt exactly in the same way, as if he were different from what we expected to see. . . . He is utterly changed; and yet sometimes, when he was animated in conversation concerning things removed from him, I saw something of his former self; but never when we were alone with him. . . . His fatness has quite changed him. It is more like the flesh of a person in a dropsy than one in health, his eyes are lost in it. . . . The divine expression of his countenance, alas! I never saw it, as it used to be; a shadow, a gleam there was at times, but how faint and transitory!"

About two months later, in January, 1807, Wordsworth was so far recovered from the shock of disillusionment as to be able to read *The Prelude* aloud to his friend. Through one long night he read, and the 'glow came back to Coleridge's face, as

with generous self-forgetfulness he gloried in that triumph of Wordsworth's genius and *character*. Then once more the spirit of poetry roused the sick man's will, and he wrote his own last great poem, the saddest and most beautiful, entitled *To a Gentleman*, containing those lines which are the tears of a stricken soul:—

"O Friend, too well thou know'st of what sad years  
The long oppression had benumbed my soul,  
That, even as life returns upon the drowned,  
The unusual joy awoke a throng of pains—  
Keen pangs of Love, awakening, as a babe  
Turbulent, with an outcry in the heart!  
And fears self-willed, that shunned the eye of Hope;  
And Hope that scarce would know itself from Fear;  
Sense of past youth, and manhood come in vain,  
And genius given, and knowledge won in vain."

These two points, about ten years apart in the lives of Coleridge and the Wordsworths, are the limits within which I wish to set the substance of this discussion. Although they do not correspond precisely with the dawn and the sunset of William Wordsworth's poetical day, nor even of Coleridge's, they do include the hopeful morning and the bright meridian. In trying to answer certain questions, many of them as yet unanswered and perhaps unanswerable, about the mutual relations of these three wonderful persons, three persons with one soul, we may hope to arrive at a fuller understanding of their poetry. To understand, really to understand, the work of any great poet, involves putting ourselves in his place, looking into his heart, studying the process of his education, acquiring, in short, the most complete biographical information about him that is possible. It imposes a submissive discipline. Since we have to deal with two great poets and a sister of great poets, who all three coöperated spiritually, the subject becomes unusually complex, the opportunity for research delightfully inviting, and the necessity for minute information imperative.

Four of the problems to be considered are of the kind which attract those investigators who like to seek out small biographical details and marshal them in a convincing array until at last they can cry: 'There, I have settled Hoti's business!' There

are also three larger subjects. The first of the four problems is: When and where did Wordsworth and Coleridge first meet? There is considerable likelihood, although as yet no sufficient proof, that they met at Bristol, in 1795. J. Dykes Campbell thought this was the case, but was much too cautious to make a positive assertion. I quite agree with him, both in his confidence and in his reserve. Thomas Hutchinson, in a footnote on p. xiii of his Introduction to his reprint of *Lyrical Ballads*, says:—

“The two had met in the autumn of 1795 at the Bristol house of Mr. Pinney of Racedown, and already by May, 1796, Wordsworth had become ‘a very dear friend of mine who is, in my opinion, the best poet of the age’.”

There is probably evidence lurking somewhere, in private collections of letters, or old business records of Cottle's publishing house. If someone can definitely prove that the two poets were acquainted in the flesh and not merely by hearsay, as early as 1795, the discovery will have no small value for biography and criticism. A good working hypothesis would be that they met at Bristol in that year through the intervention either of Cottle or of Southey.

The second problem, closely dependent on the first, is: To ascertain whether Wordsworth was not more intimately connected with the Pantisocratic scheme than has heretofore been proved. I do not suppose that he was, at the most, half so deeply involved as Coleridge, Southey, Lovell, Burnett, and the three Fricker sisters, and he may not have been involved at all; but the matter is worth investigating. Of course, if he was one of those Utopian adventurers, he would have tried to conceal the fact in later years. He was by nature impulsive and obstinate, but acquired, through experience, an habitual cautiousness. Neither he, in his conservative middle life and old age, nor his family after his death, would have been willing to let it be known that he was once a communist. How interesting it would be to discover that at least he considered the advisability of joining the Susquehanna band; interesting, and indeed satisfactory as indicating that he was brave enough to put his princi-

ples into practice and also perhaps that he wished to provide a home in the wilderness for Dorothy, Annette and Caroline.

The third problem is more likely to reward research. We know that both Wordsworth and Coleridge, at various times between 1792 and 1797, were acquainted with a number of political agitators who bore the opprobrious name of English Jacobins, because of their sympathy with the French revolution and their efforts to propagate revolutionary doctrines in Britain. Here there has doubtless been a systematic suppression of the truth in subsequent years. The problem is: To enlarge our knowledge of the details of the association of Wordsworth and Coleridge with such persons as Dr. Priestley, William Godwin, Horne Tooke, Thomas Holcroft, John Thelwall, Joseph Fawcett, Helen Maria Williams, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Johnson the radical publisher. Much valuable information about this circle has been accumulated by Professor Charles Cestre, in his *Life of Thelwall* and his *La Révolution française et les poètes anglais*; by Edward Smith, in his good but too small book, *The English Jacobins*; by Kegan Paul, in his *William Godwin, his Friends and Contemporaries*; and by Professor B. Sprague Allen, in a series of monographs; but a careful ransacking of the newspapers and other periodicals of the time would, I believe, yield further items. The efforts of English radicals in the last quarter of the eighteenth century form a fascinating but suppressed and therefore obscure chapter in political and literary history. If it ever was difficult to see why so little attention was paid to it by chroniclers who belonged to that generation, we, who are now drifting in a second backwater of extreme conservative reaction and apprehension, should be able to understand. One of the deplorable effects of war against a foreign country is that the necessarily excessive patriotism which such a conflict kindles regards with suspicion all radical proposals for internal reform, all unpopular causes, and those small minority parties or groups which are often the richest in character and ideas. Opinions of a purely economic description are declared by popular outcry to be subversive and contrary to the constitution of the country. Philosophic speculations which are as purely intellectual as the higher mathematics, and unlikely even in the most favorable

circumstances to bear any practical fruit for many years, are denounced on the ground that they weaken the bulwarks of society at a time when everybody should be devoting all his strength to resisting an armed enemy. In this way governments and public opinion suppress not only whatever really dangerous opposition there may be, but also those innocent, well-intended, and precious minor forms of dissent which, if allowed to exist, would be very useful as roots for fresh growths of political and social progress. The killing of these roots, it seems to me, explains the intellectual and moral sterility of France and in some degree of all Europe, for a dozen or fifteen years after the Napoleonic wars. Balzac's *Human Comedy* is an unflinching and almost cruel study of that period. The moral and intellectual decline of Wordsworth and Coleridge, which becomes noticeable as early as 1808, was part of a general reaction against free thought, caused by the excessive patriotism of a people who were persuaded that the nation was in danger.

The fourth problem should be equally inviting to a different kind of investigator. It is: To determine more fully than has yet been done the relation of Wordsworth and Coleridge to the system of ethics and politics propounded by William Godwin. I say propounded and not originated, for I do not wish to raise or to beg the question whether Godwin possessed a creative mind. It must at any rate be admitted that he brought together, in his *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, some elements of a science of psychology, the principles of a theory of ethics and a comprehensive scheme of politics, and that he made a remarkably bold attempt to coördinate all these in a philosophical system. The book was published at the most unfavorable time for immediate success. Appearing in 1793, simultaneously with the execution of Louis XVI, the outbreak of war between France and Britain, and the institution of the Terror, it was doomed to be neglected by most Englishmen and regarded as inopportune and even pernicious by almost all who read it. At first it made no impression, except one of disgust and dread, beyond a small circle. And unfortunately, when the wars with France were over, and practical prudence no longer excused people for condemning the book unread, they were in-



duced to do so by the fact that they knew Godwin chiefly as the unsatisfactory father-in-law of Shelley. I am not trying to defend Godwin's *Political Justice*, although I think that, even if it be unsound in its logic and unfortunate in its illustrations, it is a book which students of ethics, of political science, and particularly of our literature, should examine carefully and with open mind. The significant thing for students of Wordsworth and Coleridge is the indisputable fact that these poets, especially Wordsworth, belonged to that small circle of Godwin's readers and disciples; and there is a challenge to us in the determination so generally shown to minimize his influence upon them. There is an inviting opportunity for some scholar to analyze and describe Godwin's philosophy more thoroughly and fairly than anyone has yet done, and to examine the writings of Wordsworth and Coleridge with a view to determining the extent of their indebtedness to him. To take but one subdivision of this problem: such an investigator will find it necessary to study more deeply Wordsworth's tragedy, *The Borderers*, than any of his biographers and critics have ever studied it, and not dismiss it with the hasty conclusion that it was written as a refutation of Godwin's views. It may have been written as a corrective, although hardly as either a refutation or a vindication; *adhuc sub judice lis est*. Certain critics, and good ones too, observing that very little of Wordsworth's best poetry is actually dated as having been composed in the years 1793 to 1796, when he was undoubtedly a follower of Godwin, and that his great poetry apparently began to be composed in 1797, have argued as follows: a poet cannot, without danger to his art, meddle much with philosophy; in the three years when Wordsworth was giving himself the trouble to understand Godwin, the springs of poesy refused to flow; when they began to flow copiously, in 1797, he must have ceased to concern himself about philosophy. There are several unproved assertions and one or two illogical steps in this argument, and it should be challenged. *The Borderers* and Coleridge's sister tragedy *Osorio* ought to be considered together, with reference to their mutual relations and their common relation to *Political Justice*.

A fifth and more general subject concerns the moral rela-



tionship of the three persons, William and Dorothy Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Let me take as an illustration of their spiritual communion one idea which had rather a moral than a purely intellectual basis, and observe how it runs through some of their most characteristic poetry. In Coleridge's ode *Dejection*, we come, I think, closest to his heart and to that window of his heart through which he looked confidently and reverently into the heart of Wordsworth. In this, to me the most interesting of all his poems, he cries out, in sadness and defeat: 'Thou must increase, but I must decrease. Thou hast in thee the principle from which poetry springs. I had it once, but have lost it. That principle is innocent joy in life, the joy that impels to artistic creation.'

"O William! we receive but what we give,  
 And in *our* life alone does Nature live.  
 Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud!  
 And would we aught behold, of higher worth  
 Than that inanimate cold world allowed  
 To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,  
 Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth,  
 A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud  
 Enveloping the earth—  
 And from the soul itself there must be sent  
 A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,  
 Of all sweet sounds the life and element!  
 O pure of heart! Thou needs't not ask of me  
 What this strong music in the soul may be!  
 What and wherein it doth exist,  
 This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,  
 This beauteous and beauty-making power.  
 Joy, virtuous William! Joy that ne'er was given  
 Save to the pure, and in their purest hour,  
 Joy, William! is the spirit and the power,  
 Which wedding Nature to us gives in dower,  
 A new Earth and new Heaven,  
 Undreamed of by the sensual and the proud—  
 Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous cloud—  
 We, we ourselves rejoice!  
 And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,  
 All melodies the echoes of that voice,  
 All colours a suffusion from that light.  
 Yes, dearest William, yes!  
 There was a time when, though my path was rough,  
 This joy within me dallied with distress,

And all misfortunes were but as the stuff  
 Whence fancy made me dreams of happiness:  
 For hope grew round me, like the twining vine,  
 And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed mine.  
 But now afflictions bow me down to earth:  
 Nor care I, that they rob me of my mirth,  
 But oh! each visitation  
 Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,  
 My shaping spirit of Imagination."

These are among the saddest and humblest words ever written. They are also profoundly true. Coleridge uttered them in 1802, when he had had only too many proofs of his own weakness and failure. With beautiful unselfishness and generosity, he turns to his friend and bids him continue, innocent and therefore joyous, on his glorious course as poet. This thought of Coleridge's, that joy is "the spirit and the power" of poetry, was already familiar to Wordsworth. Doubtless they had hammered it out between them long before. By 'joy' they meant not merely happiness, but the perception and appropriation of a poet's chief source of happiness and indeed of his very existence as a poet,—namely, the wonder and beauty of life. We find this idea running through many of Wordsworth's most intimate passages. In *The Sparrow's Nest*, for example, he says of his sister:—

"She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;  
 And humble cares, and delicate fears;  
 A heart, the fountain of sweet tears;  
 And love, and thought, and joy.

In *Tintern Abbey* he feels that—

"with an eye made quiet by the power  
 Of harmony and the deep power of joy,  
 We see into the life of things,"

and again in the same poem he assures us that this joy of the artist is something far higher than mere animal spirits or sensual delight, when he cries:—

". . . I have felt  
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
 Of elevated thoughts."

In the lines, *To a Highland Girl*, he sings:—

"Now thanks to Heaven! that of its grace  
Hath led me to this lonely place.  
Joy have I had; and going hence  
I bear away my recompense."

The joy he means, the joy which is an indispensable element of a poet's soul, is akin to love, as we find in the *Ode to Duty*:—

"Serene will be our days and bright,  
And happy will our nature be,  
When love is an unerring light,  
And joy its own security."

Joy also clears the mind, that it may behold eternal verities,—

"... truths that wake  
To perish never;  
Which neither listlessness nor mad endeavour,  
Nor Man nor Boy,  
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,  
Can utterly abolish or destroy."

And finally these discoveries concerning the necessity of innocent joy to him who would be a poet are brought together in one magnificent gleaming pile in the last one hundred lines of the first book of *The Prelude*, the passage beginning:—

"Nor, sedulous as I have been to trace  
How Nature by extrinsic passion first  
Peopled the mind with forms sublime or fair,  
And made me love them, may I here omit  
How other pleasures have been mine, and joys  
Of subtler origin; how I have felt,  
Not seldom even in that tempestuous time,  
Those hallowed and pure motions of the sense  
Which seem, in their simplicity, to own  
An intellectual charm; that calm delight  
Which, if I err not, surely must belong  
To those first-born affinities that fit  
Our new existence to existing things,  
And, in our dawn of being, constitute  
The bond of union between life and joy."

These are only a few illustrations of the moral interaction which we are considering. It is plainly something different from a purely intellectual relation. It modified the characters of both Wordsworth and Coleridge; it determined much of their behavior; it affected their poetry in spirit and in form. There are other aspects of this relation which I shall merely mention.

One is Dorothy Wordsworth's suppressed love for Coleridge, which was something different from friendship. Another is the refining influence she exerted upon the two men. Another is the superb constancy and patience of the Wordsworths in pouring their own moral strength into Coleridge when opium was sapping his will.

The sixth inquiry is closely associated with the fifth. It relates to the more strictly intellectual aspects of the great partnership. What, for example, is Coleridge's share of the Preface to the 1800 edition of *Lyrical Ballads*? Of the following sentence, which is perhaps the most important one in that essay, we may assert with confidence that the second part, about the laws of the mind, is Coleridgean in substance and even in the very terms employed:—

“The principal object, then, proposed in these poems was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect; and, further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement.”

The hand which wrote those words may have been Wordsworth's, but the voice is that of Coleridge. These two young men were, in many of the *Lyrical Ballads* and other poems composed under the same impulses as *Lyrical Ballads*, deliberately experimenting in psychology. They were quite consciously studying the association of ideas, and chose as subjects the minds of children, old persons, and defectives, partly because such minds are the most open to inspection. Consider the subject-matter of *The Reverie of Poor Susan*, *We are Seven*, *Anecdote for Fathers*, *The Last of the Flock*, *The Idiot Boy*, *The Old Cumberland Beggar*, *Peter Bell*, and even of *Alice Fell*, to which a later date has been assigned, although, I suspect, incorrectly. Coleridge, having read more philosophy than his friend, and being more full of projects for philosophic works, probably gave the

original impetus to these studies; but, as was his way, he failed to follow out his own suggestions, and Wordsworth, being persistent, made most of the actual experiments. It is not strange that they should have been curious to observe the laws of the association of ideas, before their conversion from sensationalism to idealism; for it was by associating or grouping into species and genera the raw material furnished by the senses that, according to their teachers, anything like reason or morality or a soul manifested itself. Coleridge was naturally averse from materialism, and he saw a chance to escape from it by pursuing the laws of association to some unknown, inward, spiritual source.

At the same time that they were busying themselves with psychology in this experimental way, the two poets were thinking about the nature of mind in general and its relation to reality. They were asking themselves whether, as Coleridge had once insisted, when he was a disciple of Locke, Hume, and Hartley, the material furnished by sense-perception is the basis of all our knowledge; or whether, as was taught by his new masters, Berkeley and Kant, the mind itself creates what we call external reality. Here again it is probable that the original impulse came from Coleridge, whereas Wordsworth, with his more practical turn, his liking for the definite and the concrete, and his steady self-command, was the one who gave the most memorable poetic expression to the thought. When Wordsworth, in *Tintern Abbey*, speaks of—

“ . . . all the mighty world  
Of eye and ear,—both what they half create  
And what perceive”,—

is he not employing, although with a curious and significant reservation, the language of philosophical idealism, and who but Coleridge has been his teacher? In *The Eolian Harp*, composed in 1795, Coleridge had already uttered the thought which found a more famous, but not more distinct, expression in *Tintern Abbey* three years later; Coleridge exclaims:—

“O, the one life within us and abroad,  
Which meets all motion and becomes its soul,  
A light in sound, a soundlike power in light,  
Rhythm in all thought, and joyance everywhere—

Methinks it should have been impossible  
 Not to love all things in a world so filled ;  
 Where the breeze warbles, and the mute still air  
 Is music slumbering on her instrument.

And what if all of animated nature  
 Be but organic harps diversely framed,  
 That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps  
 Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,  
 At once the Soul of each, and God of all?"

When the friends went to Germany, in September, 1798, and separated there, Wordsworth fell back upon sad and delicious memories and wrote the Lucy poems, while Coleridge, at Göttingen, buried himself in Kantian metaphysics, from which he never fully emerged. To Coleridge henceforth Nature became more and more indistinct; his interest in phenomenal life faded away; an overpowering sense of the reality of God and of the human mind took possession of him, to the almost complete obliteration of the material world. This was fatal to the poetic impulse, which drives its possessors to fasten with passionate intensity upon particulars. "Every Minute Particular is sacred", said Blake, and perhaps no wiser word, no more religious word, has ever been uttered. Fortunately, when Coleridge wrote verse he wrote as a poet and not as a philosopher. The strange and blessed thing about his poetry, considering that it is his, is that it deals so often with minute particulars and so rarely with abstractions.

The Lucy poems are so like living, sensitive creatures, that I hesitate to use them as examples in a mere argument; yet their philosophical implications are so significant that I feel obliged to call attention to them. There are two of these implications, both of them antagonistic to Coleridge's new idealistic views. One is that Nature moulds the mind of man; this is perhaps Wordsworth's deepest and most permanent conviction, and the most wonderful expression of it is found in the Lucy poem, "Three Years She Grew in Sun and Shower":—

"Three years she grew in sun and shower.  
 Then Nature said 'A lovelier flower  
 On earth was never sown ;  
 This Child I to myself will take ;



She shall be mine, and I will make  
A lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be  
Both law and impulse: and with me  
The Girl, in rock and plain,  
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,  
Shall feel an overseeing power  
To kindle or restrain."

But how intractable Coleridge's pupil has become! How completely he has thrown off the authority of the master, who at this time was coming to the conclusion that Nature is only a creation of Mind! Another implication, boldly conveyed through a Lucy poem, is that the human mind does not exist apart from matter:—

"No motion has she now, no force;  
She neither hears nor sees;  
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,  
With rocks, and stones, and trees."

Coleridge, therefore, is reproving Wordsworth for his materialism, when he exclaims, in the poem entitled *Dejection*, otherwise so humble and self-reproachful:—

"O William! we receive but what we give,  
And in *our* life alone does Nature live."

Still another subject that invites attention is less a problem than a field for ruminating minds, enjoying a quiet pleasure spread over many years. I am referring to the correspondences, in tone and spirit, in subject-matter sometimes, and in technique quite often, between the poetry of Wordsworth and that of Coleridge, especially in the great productive years 1797, 1798 and 1799. It is, to me at least, a deep and sacred delight to read Coleridge's conversation poems, which fill me with sweeter satisfaction than even his more famous mystery poems, and to feel the other presences rise from the shades with his and take their place within hearing; for these poems presuppose the listening ears and sympathizing hearts of "dear William and dear Dorothea". I mean particularly *This Lime tree Bower my Prison*, *Frost at Midnight*, *The Nightingale*, the Hexameters written in Germany, and most particularly *Fears in Solitude*. *Fears in Solitude* was composed in April, 1798, about three

months before Wordsworth composed *Tintern Abbey*. Notwithstanding the dissimilarity of the two poems in subject and in tone, we experience, when we read them, one immediately after the other, a subtle sense of likeness. The voice rises and falls, hastens and retards, with the same natural respiration in both poems. They resemble each other in general structure, each consisting, for instance, of an intensely vibrating outburst of emotional discourse set between a quiet prelude and a slow recession. In *Fears in Solitude* and some of the other conversation poems, Coleridge used English blank verse, that mightiest and yet most flexible of all poetic forms, with unmatched success in a particular way, which I shall not attempt to describe, merely remarking that Wordsworth followed it too, although with not so shining feet, nor treading with so soft a pace.

Just one more example of these correspondences must be given. Probably no one admires *Peter Bell* as much as *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, nor do I claim for it anything like so great excellence. Parts of it which are playful fail to blend appropriately with other parts which are serious. I am enough of a Wordsworthian not to be offended by those passages which are sometimes said to flout good sense and true artistic taste, by being too simple. It includes some keen perception and some rare beauties of tone and drawing, but its total effect is for most readers entirely lost, because they have no conception of its meaning, which is concealed in the cumbersome Prologue. Its meaning will at least be clear, however unacceptable, if we consider that it was intended to be the counterpart of *The Ancient Mariner*. Coleridge's purpose was to treat a subject involving supernatural agency with such naturalness in the details as to produce an effect of reality. Wordsworth wrote *Peter Bell* in 1798, the year in which Coleridge completed *The Ancient Mariner*, and no doubt his intention was to publish it in *Lyrical Ballads* as a companion piece constructed on the reverse principle of giving the effect of supernatural awe to natural incidents. Cottle considered it too long to be so included. When Wordsworth finally published it, in 1819, he wrote to Southey as follows:—

“The Poem of *Peter Bell*, as the Prologue will show, was composed under a belief that the Imagination not only does not require for its exercise the intervention of supernatural agency, but that, though such agency be excluded, the

faculty may be called forth as imperiously and for kindred results of pleasure, by incidents, within the compass of poetic probability, in the humblest departments of daily life."

It was his purpose to produce a weird and awesome effect, similar to that of *The Ancient Mariner*, to do so by entirely natural means, and also to illustrate his fundamental and most characteristic principle, namely, that Nature has power to mould the moral life of man.

Whether this principle be sound or unsound, it was held by Wordsworth when he wrote the poem and for a long time afterwards; it is emphatically and startlingly expressed in *Tintern Abbey*, *Expostulation and Reply*, *The Tables Turned*, *Three Years She Grew in Sun and Shower*, *Ruth*, *The White Doe of Rylstone*, and many parts of *The Prelude*; and although it is questioned and qualified in the *Ode to Duty* and *Elegiac Stanzas* (Peele Castle), it most certainly was not abandoned in favor of the Christian doctrine of the Atonement until later than 1807. The strange thing is that, having held back *Peter Bell* through his heretical years, he should have printed it at all, for it is flagrantly inconsistent with the orthodox theology which he professed in 1819, the date of its publication.

What does he teach in *Peter Bell*? He teaches quite deliberately that a hardened sinner may be brought to the perception of his guilt, to contrition, repentance, and conversion from a sinful life, by "the influence of natural objects". It cannot be reasonably urged that Wordsworth was capable of overlooking the enormous incongruity between such teaching and the orthodox, traditional 'plan of salvation', as enunciated by St. Paul and incorporated in creeds and catechisms, both Catholic and Protestant; or that he was indifferent to the effect of his poem upon the religious feelings of those who might read it. He made some attempt to modify its original stark naturalism by introducing, twenty years after the first composition, certain Christian elements, for example, this stanza (from the edition of 1819), whose magnificence is quite out of key with the simpler music which it interrupts:—

" In memory of that solemn day  
When Jesus humbly deigned to ride,  
Entering the proud Jerusalem,  
By an immeasurable stream  
Of shouting people glorified."

We know, from his own statement, that these lines were suggested by Haydon's picture of Christ's Entry into Jerusalem, which he saw in 1817.

It is unfortunate that a poem which was originally intended as the counterpart of *The Ancient Mariner*, and which bodies forth so boldly Wordsworth's most peculiar and cherished view of the relation between Nature and Man, should have been made obnoxious to ridicule by a Prologue in which the author labors to be playful and succeeds only in being sublimely awkward or awkwardly sublime, except in one splendid passage. This passage is, I feel confident, a part, or perhaps the whole, of the original Prologue, for we know, from records in Dorothy's *Journal*, that he wrote more than one and pulled his material about until he made the unhappy mess that now exists. The passage contains three stanzas in Wordsworth's best "early manner". They are plain, dignified, and full of the true Wordsworthian philosophy of 1798. Having them, we may say there's *nothing* in a flying horse, there's *nothing* in a huge balloon, nor even in a little boat, shaped like the crescent moon; and were it not for these three stanzas, indeed, we might wish to expostulate, like Hippolyta, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: "He hath played on his prologue like a child on a recorder; a sound, but not in government."

He thought of Coleridge and the supernatural agencies employed in *The Ancient Mariner*, and sang:—

"Long have I loved what I behold,  
The night that calms, the day that cheers;  
The common growth of mother-earth  
Suffices me—her tears, her mirth,  
Her humblest mirth and tears.

"The dragon's wing, the magic ring,  
I shall not covet for my dower,  
If I along that lowly way  
With sympathetic heart may stray,  
And with a soul of power.

"These given, what more need I desire  
To stir, to soothe, or elevate?  
What nobler marvels than the mind  
May in life's daily prospect find,  
May find or there create?

GEORGE McLEAN HARPER.

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## WORDSWORTH'S *MICHAEL*

*Michael* is a poem distinctively Wordsworthian. With little of the mystic beauty of the *Lines Written above the Wye*, with almost nothing of the enchanted music which haunts *The Solitary Reaper*, it is, nevertheless, equally impressed with elemental meaning. In certain ways the poem is an index to the changes of a century, for it interprets a state of feeling incomprehensible to the average man of to-day, who, a dweller in cities, finds this record of a solitary old sheepman trite and dull. We need to read *Michael* as we read Greek tragedy, that we may live in the presence of austere strength and simplicity.

A figure stern and lonely, sketched against the background of the upper slopes of Grasmere mountains, Michael has no part in the life of the lower vale. Down there, in the pleasant little village, are gray cottages covered with a tangle of woodbine and climbing roses,—yellow, white, or red. The clear Rothay glides gently over golden pebbles. Everything seems made for companionship, domestic happiness, and untroubled days of content. Above, however, on the hills, with the old shepherd are elemental silences, the grandeur of bleak mountain spaces that at sunset are shadowed by magnificent blues and amethystine grays, obliterating jagged rocky features and leaving only gracious contours of transfigured earth. Such was Michael, a being transfigured late in life.

Wordsworth pictured him in immemorial relationship to Nature. The association was, first, that of toil performed arduously: muscular contact with earth and exposure to the elements when shepherding his flock or when tilling the soil. Close to the very substance of earth and stone, almost one with sun and wind and rain, sharing the perpetual sequence of their operations, aware in every fibre of the liberty of wide mountain spaces open to the skies, this man lived as co-worker with nature, responsive to every change. But beyond toil there was a deep pleasure in the companionship of natural beauty:—

“Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds,  
Of blasts of every tone; and, oftentimes,



When others heeded not, He heard the South  
Make subterraneous music. . . .

Those fields, those hills—what could they less? had laid  
Strong hold on his affections, were to him  
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,  
The pleasure which there is in life itself."

Within doors, the daily round had typical pastoral charm. Man, wife, and son partook of traditional oaten cake and cheese; in the evenings the men labored mending the implements of toil, while the woman fulfilled her ancient destiny of weaving. The picture drawn by Wordsworth is full of homely detail, very appealing to the machine-made citizen of to-day who has lost all the poetry of primitive hand-work necessary in a self-supporting existence.

The range of Michael's emotions was narrow. Paternal feeling gradually absorbed him; sentiment, for him, existed chiefly in relation to his son. His wife had become so perfectly identified with himself as not to seem apart at all. Through the boy had been awakened in the father a sharpness of emotion, a depth of meditation which he had hitherto never known. Life revealed itself to him in new significance, nature became more intimately close through the vivifying power of human love:—

"But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could stand  
Against the mountain blasts; and to the heights  
Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,  
He with his Father daily went, and they  
Were as companions, why should I relate  
That objects which the shepherd loved before  
Were dearer now? That from the Boy there came  
Feelings and emanations—things which were  
Light to the sun and music to the wind;  
And that the old Man's heart seemed born again?"

Michael was over seventy years of age at this time. When he was eighty-four there came the tragic hour of his existence. Through the misfortune, not the fault, of a nephew, for whom he had been surety, Michael was bound to pay a sum equal to half his substance. At first he felt that in order to satisfy his creditors, he must sell his patrimonial acres, but, his heart failing him at that thought, he made plans for sending his son away



into the city where the boy might earn money for paying the debt.

A dramatic climax this was for the shepherd,—he was torn between two affections, cruelly driven to choose one of two courses, both of intense suffering,—either loss of his hereditary land or separation from the most beloved being in his world. Faithfulness to the dead or love of the living, which should be victor in the staunch mind of Michael? We in America, perhaps, cannot see very sympathetically the essence of the situation, for we do not understand this passionate English love for the soil, this sense of duty to the land associated with one's ancestors. Some of us dwell in apartments many stories removed from the soil; some of us know landed property whose traditions go back only two hundred years or so. Very few people have a sense of actual physical connection with *place*. In England, the one locality has a long account with a single family. Hundreds of years have gone while fathers and sons in succession have spent themselves in toil in one region, and have died leaving the land as a sacred possession. Continuity, the unbroken tradition, duty owed by one generation to another was implicit in Michael's being. Himself a creature of earth, descended from farmers and destined to return to dust, he had a physical sense of kinship with the tangible soil; a strange attraction between himself and this familiar earth exercised magnetic power over him. And deeper than this was the feeling of the solemn debt of his existence, his kinship with those who had once trod his fields. Ghosts of ancestral thought and feeling were about him. In a fashion, his identity was merged with the passed race; he was merely a temporal sign of the family. We who accentuate, so fiercely, individuality and distinctive personality cannot understand this creed which so limits self and merges the one in the many.

Michael, at the age of eighty-four, in addition to ancestral feeling had, moreover, that length of association with the *genius loci* which made the thought of separation from the spot where his whole life had been passed, harrowingly tragic. That Luke in later life would feel this same way he did not doubt, and with that faith he determined that—

" . . . the land  
 Shall not go from us, and it shall be free;  
 He shall possess it, free as is the wind  
 That passes over it."

Before the boy's departure, a solemn, picturesque ceremony was enacted,—the laying of foundation-stones for a new sheepfold on the hillside. This was a covenant, symbolically suggestive. The fold wherein the flock was to be sheltered was in some fashion to be a home-fold for the absent boy, a place of security. Moreover, it was a compact with youth to share and to recognize youth's duty of coöperation with the past and with the future generations. The boy, with good-will but scant understanding, accepted his share in the covenant, and departed.

Loneliness, increased toil, and deepening anxiety were the lot of the aged father, but resolutely he maintained his serenity. The *dénouement* was swift. Luke went astray, fled to a hiding-place beyond the sea, and Michael was left to grief and shame and debt. For seven years he went daily to the place of covenant, but the sheepfold was never completed,—

" . . . And 'tis believed by all  
 That many and many a day he thither went,  
 And never lifted up a single stone."

What were the old man's thoughts during those years, what stayed his hitherto busy hand from accomplishing its work? What conclusion did he reach regarding life? Cloistered he was in nature as a monk is by stone walls, shut away from worldliness, vanity, in an isolation supremely meditative. Forgiveness for his son's treachery was immediate, the father had said,—

" . . . Whatever fate  
 Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,  
 And bear thy memory with me to the grave."

The patrimonial acres were divided, and one of the chief meanings of Michael's life, from his point of view, was utterly thwarted,—he was proved unfaithful to his forefathers. The fulfillment of his suffering came in his inability to complete the mechanical task necessary for sheltering his flocks more securely. Failing in this last duty, unfaithful to his sheep, he must have suffered the intense agony of conscious defeat. Deserted,

solitary, betrayed, helpless, too old to retrieve his fortunes, too broken to search for his son, too stunned to employ his physical faculties in self-forgetting activity, Michael was at this moment an heroic figure. 'The best was yet to be' in his old age, for he was gradually constructing, not a new fold but a new world, based upon foundations of spiritual knowledge. Life for him, after three-score years and ten, gave him the chance to advance swiftly beyond declining physical existence in nature's world of use and beauty; he fortified himself in another realm, of experience, where loyalty, self-surrender, and forgiveness were supreme. He was forced to use all his powers of thought and feeling, to carry out to positive, expressive conclusion the faith that was in him. Irremediable injury, at the hands of his son, the loss of a lifetime's hope and the loss of his parental faith in his son's honor, he forgave, freely, thus manifesting his ideal of fatherhood. By a silent inward conquest he bore witness to his knowledge that—

"There is a comfort in the strength of love;  
'T will make a thing endurable, which else  
Would overset the brain, or break the heart."

The depth of his anguish and of his love changed him from a strongly vital force of nature into a profoundly active consciousness. The terrible impact with grief, a powerful antithesis to his previous struggles with stone and storm, struck the light which made him see with intense clearness that depth of thought and feeling is the justification of human existence, that control of thought and feeling is the true freedom of the universe. Michael died, his wife died, the cottage—

"Is gone—the ploughshare has been through the ground  
On which it stood . . . . .  
. . . . . and the remains  
Of the unfinished Sheepfold may be seen  
Beside the boisterous brook of Greenhead Ghyll."

One asks, involuntarily, what it may mean, this suffering and this gain of understanding on the part of a man whose life had come so near its close and had so little contact with other lives beyond his family. What significance can there be in the experience of an individual who lives and dies unto himself in obscurity? Regarding Michael's experience as limited to this

present world, one wonders, perhaps, if it is one more instance of the inherent cruelty in life. Is there anything enduring out of this tragedy? We are, to-day, rather too much inclined to estimate life socially, to disallow the values of the isolated existence, and that is one of the reasons for our crowded cities and our pessimism. Wordsworth has exalted this solitary, has shown that it is possible for the individual to know within himself the meaning of experience, no matter how late in life it comes, nor how unshared it is. We are slaves to the notion of utility, be it mechanical or spiritual usefulness; we cannot bear to have experiences, as we say, wasted.

Michael, the Leech-Gatherer, Emily of Rylstone are, in their distinctive ways, interpreters of the life in solitude; they illustrate the integrity of the spiritual life "in lonely places". Although Michael's life was limited in its contacts, his existence a transient show of being, his individuality unknown to other men, we are convinced that his last days affirmed the truth that experience explains itself to him who endures to the uttermost. The explanation may not be wholly adequate, it may not bring content, but it does bring an awe-inspiring feeling of the power, the inexhaustible reach of the inner life which challenges man's will to struggle for understanding.

MARTHA HALE SHACKFORD.

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### THREE GHOSTS WALK

VOLTAIRE: Ah, there at last is our dear Jean-Jacques, pottering among his asphodels. . . . *Cher Maître*, will you join us in a philosophic stroll? In this realm of equality we might forget our terrestrial grudge.

DIDEROT: Yes, come, Jean-Jacques; here's your stick. Come!

ROUSSEAU: Agreed; one thinks most easily while walking. What were you talking about?

VOLTAIRE: About the moderns. What's your opinion of your literary grandchildren? You can't deny them now; they've found their genealogist. Have you read Babbitt, Diderot?

DIDEROT: Yes, it's better than *Main Street*. But they hardly compare with *L'Education Sentimentale* and *Madame Bovary*.

VOLTAIRE: I fear you mean the novel. I meant the American critic, a somewhat Emersonian Dr. Johnson. Well, it seems that his *bête noire* is Rousseau and his followers; so he has demolished all of your moderns in several bulky octavos. You're the original sin, citizen of Geneva—the cause of Man's Fall from rationalism into the dark pool of the emotions. You are the very devil, my dear fellow! And I never suspected it!

ROUSSEAU: He must be a renegade romanticist! For Emerson appreciated my vitalizing enthusiasm!

VOLTAIRE: Yes, but, as I once pointed out, not all enthusiasm is salutary. This critic accepts only the emotions which are above the reason.

DIDEROT: The emotions above the reason! I conceive he means the diaphragm. All the romanticists, including the latest poets, suffer from an undue sensitiveness or mobility of the diaphragm.

VOLTAIRE: Ah, that accounts for some of my gastric reactions to their verses. But your delimitation, Diderot, would bar out only the school of Zola and the expressionists. No, our friend would draw the line, I fancy, just below the cerebrum, thus excluding all the senses. It's a nice distinction, this, and a very useful one. It sweeps away all the works written in the last century, and perhaps your own with them.

DIDEROT: Sweep away Rousseau's works! When they're getting out school-editions of him in America!



VOLTAIRE: Yes, Rousseau's alive, even outside the Red camp. He's a political as well as a literary figure. I'm dead, because no one is interested in religion, *pro* or *con*. I have no literary posterity, and if I had they would not be read. The Third Estate cannot be roused from its smugness, even by the Ade of slap-stick satire. But let's get back to Romanticism and the moderns.

DIDEROT: You might have asked me; I first opposed the old tradition, in our talks at the Café Procope. Even Jean-Jacques paradoxes——

VOLTAIRE [*sotto voce*]: You are spoiling things; our friend will go off in a huff. Don't take away Rousseau's originality. He won it afterward, as Balzac won the right to use the *de*. Your share—but forget it, Diderot; soon you can defend your realists. They need it.

ROUSSEAU: But at first romanticism was realism. Was it not a return to nature? After all, both schools give us the real man with his passions and feelings, not a dry Aristotelean abstraction made in a court reeking with suppressions. Myself, Chateaubriand, Bashkirtseff, Moore, Joyce and Lawrence——

VOLTAIRE: Suppressions! Oh yes, their new word for taste and social tact. The last century, then, was realistic because it opened all the doors—to emotion with the romanticists, to sensation with the realists, and to the *libido* with the expressionists, who inventory the unmentionable. Your *Confessions* now, your *Reveries* forestall even the writers of to-day, but you never quite forgot that the mansion of literature has also a drawing-room. Frankly, these new confession-novels are more tiresome than the convict-heroes and the courtesan heroines of the eighteen-thirties.

ROUSSEAU: Remember,—a new school can assert itself only by a revolt.

VOLTAIRE: They are too revolting to suit the Graces. They are documents, not Art.

DIDEROT: You haven't discarded, I see, the conventionality by which our sensual age added zest to its pleasures.

VOLTAIRE: In matters of taste and the common decencies I have discarded nothing. Both of you have had to change—'evolve'—as modern stylists would put it; you were forced to do

so by your literary family. But I, having none, am unaffected by '93 and the influx of the mob into the reading-room.

DIDEROT: Don't tell me you are still a classicist! a partisan of convention!

VOLTAIRE: Can't you see that the classicist inheritance is responsible for the best of the French moderns,—Vigny, Mérimée, Flaubert, Leconte de Lisle, Anatole France? I shouldn't wonder classicism might not return some day!

ROUSSEAU: In what *genre*? Certainly not on the stage!

VOLTAIRE: Perhaps not. But last year's sensational drama used the abstraction or type. And they still play Greek drama occasionally, and Molière.

DIDEROT: But the outworn stage-conventions, the monologues, the tiresome psychology——

VOLTAIRE: What are the expressionists doing except dissect motives? In fact, all the novelists like Stendhal, Bourget, James and Proust? Of course, they are not the same motives as those used in Racine; *tempora mutantur*. You can find the unity of time observed in some plays and in novels like Swinnerton's *Nocturne*. Unity of place, under different lightings, is frequent in modern stage-setting. What are these but the unchanging principles of art?

DIDEROT: But not the sole principles. Remember, the Ass in my Fable preferred the Cuckoo's song to the Nightingale's: that's your partisan of rules. At any rate, the claptrap of mythology is done for, and the habit of not calling a spade a spade——

VOLTAIRE: How about Cabell's *Jurgen*? There's plenty of mythology for you. And as for periphrasis, it was well for the book that its author was a master of allusion. I say, Rousseau, what did you think of *Jurgen*?

ROUSSEAU: I found him immoral and vulgar and stupid. The night I read *Jurgen*—that was a night wasted.

DIDEROT: I should think it would recall your own *Pays de chimères*. Admit now that the novel ends well, like *La Nouvelle Héloïse*: the moral code is upheld. But vulgar! My dear Jean-Jacques, vulgarity is simply a matter of vocabulary. Take Anatole France and the smoking-room stories of Jacques Tournebroche!

ROUSSEAU: La Bruyère said: "There is a good and a bad taste, and one may dispute"——

VOLTAIRE: Granted; but La Bruyère was talking of style.

ROUSSEAU: That's a dead issue in these days of cheep prints. The ordered dignity of noble diction—nothing will bring that back!

DIDEROT: Well, you find crude imitations of magniloquence—as well as of the classical brevity—in advertisements and film-headings. But their rhetoric is different, and I first set the example in my plays. It is the cry of passion which dictates the fitting phrase. My disciple Griffith——

VOLTAIRE:—proves by his captions that cinema tragedy, like Shakespeare, uses the comic relief! Quite unconsciously! Your disciples, Diderot, are the journalists and the publicity experts of to-day and even they are learning the force of simplicity. The blurb is almost as much of a joke as the old circus poster. Adjectives destroy one another, and a single one weakens the noun.

DIDEROT: You are talking of oratorical prose, not descriptive.

VOLTAIRE: I am talking of the prose in which fiction was once written and which may well serve it again. The rationalist's vocabulary alone endures. *Candide*, my dear friends, is more largely sold to-day than *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, and one of my tales would still be published anonymously in the *Figaro* and paid for. That could not be said of a passage of Chateaubriand or—ahem!—some others, unless the page were signed.

ROUSSEAU: I would wager that one of my new Reveries would not be rejected!

VOLTAIRE: But in style at least you were more classical than romantic; you used the old vocabulary and you cultivated the classical terseness. Of the later romanticists, only Flaubert had the sense to come to us for models. Hence his prose is that of an intellectual aristocrat.

ROUSSEAU: Thank Heaven, literature is no longer ruled by your bewigged mandarins. My lieutenant Hugo put the red cap on the dictionary of the French Academy, and the imagists are doing the same for English.

VOLTAIRE: Yes, like Atalanta, literature has stooped to conquer. But red caps wear out; the Greeks stroll bareheaded down through the centuries.

CLOVIS COXE.

## AMONG THE FELLS

(GRASMERE)

Midway among the mountains, sweetly and tranquilly hidden  
Lies the village I love, low in the valley of rest ;  
Poets have dwelt in her places, fortune has found her unbidden,  
Fame that never will die—fame will be always her guest.

Musing I stood in the churchyard, once on a fair summer even;  
Rain had been falling,—but sweet, soft as the breast of a bird,  
Smote on my temples the sunset breeze which the twilight had  
given,  
While in the thicket a thrush, lone and melodious, I heard.

Into the church of the Saxon saint were the worshippers wending,  
Came to my ears like a dream hymns my childhood had known,  
Near me a peasant had ventured, shyly the stranger befriending,  
Me, the tourist, the sad guest of a Sunday alone.

"Yonder", he said, "do you see them, sir, the two graves that  
are lyin'  
Side by side in the grass? two they are of an age.  
Father and daughter they are, sir, old men mind them a-dyin',  
While the son was away, gone down south for a wage.

"Would n't you think 'twas a garden, that one covered with roses,  
Pinks and lavender too, gay as a cottager's plot?  
Down from the fellside yonder, clamberin' down with his posies,  
Comes a crippled old man, storm or shine, to the spot ;

"Labours as hard as a hedger, setting his seeds and his flowers,  
Weeds and waters and digs, trims the grave with his hook—  
Mutters and talks to his sister, whispers and mutters for hours—  
Gives the *other* poor grave not so much as a look !

"No one knows how the sister died, so young and so pretty,  
Folks can see that the son has agin's father a spite—

Many have said that he's crazy, parson says naught but—'a  
pity!'

Ay, 'tis a wonder, for sure,—thankee, sir, and good-night."

Musing I stood where he left me. "Poet", I said, "of the mountains,  
Tale of the fellside is this such as thy soul would have loved—  
Come from the grave, and of human frailty and pity the fountains  
Sealed to us now, unclose, say how this spirit was moved!"

Once again in the churchyard stood I when autumn was wailing,  
Floods were out on the fells, loud did the cataracts rave;—  
Hid in the porch I watched him, fierce and feeble and failing,  
Fling the weeds from the one, all on the *other* poor grave!

"Poet", again I murmured, "how would this lonely being  
Stir thy soul in his wrath—dark as the tale that it tells;—  
Rugged his soul and forsaken, desolate heart and unseeing,  
Soul of the mountains is this—heart of the pitiless fells!"

KATHLEEN KNOX.

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## A LADY WHO DESERVES TO BE REMEMBERED

There are many shadowy personalities who flit ghostlike around the outskirts of biographies of the great, and who must be excluded from histories of literature; yet how interesting they are! One thinks of the ungirt, sluggish figure of Mrs. Leigh Hunt, chief detestation of her family physician and of Mrs. Carlyle; of Mark Twain's mother, who at eighty took a long and fruitless journey in order to see an old flame of her youth; of Miss Mary Emerson, whose Puritanical eyes could not bear the brilliancy of bright ribbons worn by her seventy-year-old guest, and who, fearing with New England thoroughness that her displeasure might go unnoted, remarked: "Perhaps you noticed, Mrs. Thoreau, that I closed my eyes during your call. I did so because I did not wish to look on the ribbons you are wearing, so unsuitable for a child of God and a person of your years."<sup>1</sup> Or how satisfying it would be to know more about those early loves of The Young Boswell whom Dr. Tinker has recently resurrected; or whether Goldsmith really did love the "Jessamy Bride" or not. Better still would I like to have the complete life-stories of some dozen or more very human serving-maids, presented in the sparkling letters of Mrs. Carlyle.

There is one lady—cool and grey, quiet and unobtrusive in comparison with the colorful glow of Jane Welsch Carlyle—who has always interested me since first I gave my allegiance to the family at number 4, Cheyne Row. She is Mary Aitken, afterwards Mrs. Alexander Carlyle, niece of the Sage of Chelsea, and his devoted nurse, amanuensis—and foster-mother—during the last dreary years of his life.

She was the daughter of Carlyle's sister Jean, the 'Crow', as the family affectionately called her because of her black hair and eyes. In childhood this little Crow was a vivid, original body, a great favorite with Jeannie Welsch, who exclaimed: "Such a child ought to be educated!" Later, in the lonely Craiggenputtock

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<sup>1</sup>Cited by William Morton Payne in his *Leading American Essayists*, p. 245.

days, Jane Welsch Carlyle undertook to supervise the education of her clever little sister-in-law, but the pedagogic scheme undertaken with young ardor by both teacher and pupil did not develop smoothly. Poor Jeannie Carlyle, with the unaccustomed drudgery of her farm life, her "dyspeptic polar bear"<sup>2</sup> to be kept reasonably peaceable, and her own quick temper harassed by the awful loneliness in which one "could hear the grass grow", had little time and small temperamental fitness to instruct a restless twelve-year-old, given to strange fits of rural silence. 'Little Crow Jean', therefore, did not follow the "poetical promise of her childhood", but developed into a practical, sweet-tempered, and fairly well-informed woman. In due time she married her cousin, James Aitken, a house-painter in Dumphries. Of him Carlyle said: "James Aitken is an ingenious, clever kind of fellow with fair prospects, no bad habits and perhaps very great skill in his craft." Such were the parents of Mary Aitken.

We see nothing of Mary's childhood; but we know that the clannish nature of the Carlyles kept Thomas and his wife in touch with his sister's family. Mary first emerges from the vagueness of "Jean's household" when in 1868 she came to keep house for her uncle in the bereaved home in Cheyne Row. After the death of his wife in 1866 Carlyle was for two years pathetically restless and unsettled. For all his trumpeted love of silence he could not endure being left alone, and had tried various and unsuccessful experiments in companionship. For the first few months after his wife's death he had been looked after by his brother, Dr. John Carlyle, and by Mrs. Carlyle's cousin, Miss Maggie Welsch. He had tried travel, visits, the companionship of his sister Jean, living alone—this last the worst—but no arrangement seemed to have about it the least element of permanence. In July, 1868, he paid his annual visit to Scotland and when he returned in September he brought back with him Mary Aitken. She remained with him to the end of his life—twelve years of devotion and service as beautiful and selfless as may be recorded.

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<sup>2</sup> A term Carlyle once applied to himself.

And what a winsome, quiet little figure she is. No other word seems so well to describe her as *winsome*. Of her Charles Eliot Norton wrote in 1869:—

“I went last evening with Grant Duff, Professor Tyndall and a friend of the latter . . . to see Carlyle. . . . In the parlor upstairs we found a pleasant-looking elderly lady . . . and a young lady, a Miss Aitken, a niece of Carlyle’s who lives much with him, and who looks like the New England country niece who might come down to the city to take care of uncle.”

Carlyle’s own description of her is more intimate and more picturesque. He calls her “Willing, swift and eager”—“a wise little thing, honest, I think, as spring water; pretty to look upon; and shines here like a small taper, slightly breaking the gloom of my new element”. A picture taken of her several years later, at Kirkaldy with her uncles Thomas and John, bears witness to her pleasant prettiness, and all who mention her pay tribute to her quiet cheerfulness and to the clarity of her intellect and spirit. The expression “honest as spring water” best describes her. This transparent, crystal honesty shows in everything she does and says. In the letters she writes it is a striking and pleasant quality. There is about them no attempt at ornamentation or stylistic effect, but they convey always a perfectly clear meaning, and have a forthrightness of style that can come only as a result of very straight thinking.

After a brief period of “discovering London”, a rare excitement doubtless in her quiet country-bred life, she settled unobtrusively into her task as companion to her erratic but devoted old uncle. He was at this time employed in revising, rearranging and indexing the Library Edition of his works, and Mary was set the task of aiding him. Her copy-book handwriting and her swift, intelligent obedience made her a good secretary. The publishing of this thirty-four volume edition lasted over a period of two years.

Gradually she came to take over a large part of his correspondence, for the palsy in his right hand that had first showed itself in 1862 grew gradually worse. By 1869 he could write only with a pencil, and by 1871 scarcely at all. From this time

on most of his letters and all of his works intended for publication were dictated to her. When we realize how temperamentally unsuited he was for dictation we can understand a little of what Mary's tact and patience must have been. When the work on hand was merely editing, things went with comparative smoothness, but when he launched forth on *The Early Kings of Norway* and *Portraits of John Knox* the strain on his amanuensis must have been tremendous. In 1872 he wrote to Dr. John:—

"We are working dreadfully, poor Mary and I, at that monster of a Norse Preface or Sketch of the Early Kings of Norway; seldom did I undertake a more totally worthless thing, never anything at all which so bothered me in getting executed or came so near the impossible in this fatal want of a right hand. . . . Mary talks of being actually done with the copying (as I with the correcting) about the end of next week."

Mary's programme as amanuensis was not only difficult, because of the tempestuous rhetoric and nature of her dictator, but was also arduous in its extent. Carlyle's correspondence was always voluminous, and besides attending to it and to the work in connection with his publications, she was, at one time, set the unnecessary task of collecting names to a petition for a pension to be given Miss Geraldine Jewsbury, Mrs. Carlyle's hysterical friend, who later did so deep an injury to the memory of Carlyle and his wife.

How quickly Carlyle became dependent on the tactful ministration of this remarkable young lady is evident from the increased moroseness he exhibited whenever she was away. In April, 1867, she spent a few days in Liverpool, during which time Carlyle wrote to his brother John: "Mary has gone off to Liverpool; glided off on a sudden on Thursday to meet her mother. . . . Since Mary went I have had my very worst spell of sleeplessness." And again he complains of the intolerable bother of having to buy new clothes without feminine supervision. On her returns his spirits usually regained their normal level which FitzJames Stephen describes as "a state of cheerful despondency".

On all of his trips he took her, and wherever she went she was a favorite. One charming touch of her personality we get in a

letter written by him to his brother from Melchet Court, where in 1871 he and Mary were visiting Miss Bromley: "Mary is a first favorite here with everybody. Tell Jean that with my love." That this quiet little county-bred girl, plunged suddenly into the company of fashion and genius—at large country houses and big dinners, with Ashburtons, Bromleys, Turgeniefs, Emerson, a medley of celebrities and celebrity-hunters—should have held her own, kept her head, and been a "first favorite with everybody" marks her as a woman of unusual personality and poise.

She was more than amanuensis and companion; she was nurse as well, for Carlyle's health was slowly failing. In 1871 he was definitely ill—as we learn from a letter to his brother: "Mary is very good and kind, poor little soul, has been up three times in the hollow of the night ministering to me like a beneficent little fairy." In June of the same year he thought his end was not far off and many of his friends shared this belief. Although he had still ten years more before him, his illnesses, real and imagined, needed Mary's constant care. "Dying of old age", he once pathetically remarked, "is a painful process." His sleeplessness increasing, he at one time engaged in midnight strolls, on which Mary usually accompanied him, waking at his slightest call and ready in the shortest possible time to set out on one of these queer prowls. And all this in spite of the fact that as Carlyle grew weaker his temper grew more irascible. We hope, however, that it did not often vent itself on Mary, and we have reason to believe that it did not; first, because there are very few cases on record of any even mild ill-temper toward her; and second, because after his death she declared that he was never the domestic tyrant Froude had depicted him, but unflinching kind and considerate. And remembering her honesty, "like spring water", we are forced to believe her. That she was not only a patient nurse but a most ingenious one we learn from the story of a marvellous bed she once constructed to suit Carlyle's whim when they were visiting at Kesten Lodge, Beckingham, and when troubled by sleeplessness he wished for a bed like the one he was accustomed to at home. He writes:—



"We are doing well here, not ill at all. . . . Mary contrived what is equivalent to a real Four-post bed without the roof and with only half a side; but complete in the bottom part against all inroad of light (big clothes-horse, with big red table cover, firmly fixed with luggage straps) really an admirable bed in which I, every night since, sleep pretty much as usual at Chelsea, and find it an immense relief and comfort to what preceded."

It is difficult to visualize this remarkable bed, but not at all difficult to admire the ingenuity and, I believe, the humor that went into its contriving. Here, by the way, Mary met many more celebrities and continued a favorite with them all.

During the years that follow we get only occasional glimpses of her. We learn that her brother James was killed in an omnibus accident and that Mary at this time went home alone for a short visit to her mother. Every summer she and her uncle went to Scotland, and although they usually spent most of the time while there at her mother's home, when Carlyle wished to go elsewhere she accompanied him. We see them still visiting occasionally the "houses of the great", and working laboriously at home on the supplement to Schiller. "Mary and I are still standing faithfully to our poor bit of work; the translation fairly ended and mostly re-copied and put right." Through all the story of these years Mary is in the background—for the most part entirely out of sight—but we can feel her presence, quiet, unobtrusive, but indispensable. Occasionally the brightness of her "small taper" of a personality shines for a moment, and then twinkles out into obscurity.

In June, 1875, Carlyle made Mary a present of one hundred pounds and repeated the gift the next year. He was now a rich man and, always generous, delighted to give to those he loved. They had just struggled through the *Portraits of John Knox*, the dullest piece of work Carlyle ever did, and the gifts were doubtless in appreciation of her patience and painstaking work with this, the last really literary undertaking of his life.

The letters Mary writes at this time are interesting in that they show less strict dictation, being evidently outlined and left to her discretion for the phrasing. The result is, as in the case

of a curious letter to Frances Power Cobbe, an odd modification of Carlylean vehemence through the softer and sometimes clearer medium of his secretary.

In 1878, for the second summer since Mary's stay with her uncle, the visit to Scotland had to be given up because of his increasing weakness. Through the scanty records of these last sad years Mary's patience and clear-headed service furnish the only points of cheer. Once we see her negotiating with cool, practical good sense for the purchase of a brougham that Carlyle sadly needed but was too perverse to attend to buying. Once we see her tactfully appeasing his impatience and arranging for Mrs. Allingham to sketch a picture of him in his grey dressing-gown and one of the curious, gay-colored caps he wore.

In the early summer of 1879 Carlyle and his niece went to Dumfries, so that he might be near his brother John who was rapidly failing in health. This plan also brought Mary near her mother, whose home was in Dumfries, and incidentally (although this was not part of the scheme) near her cousin Alec. We first hear definitely of Alexander Carlyle, junior, in 1876 when he wrote his uncle Thomas of the death in Canada of Alexander, senior. In September, 1878, Mary and her uncle returned to Cheyne Row and were, during the most of the long and bitter winter that followed, housebound. It was a hard, dreary time, filled with the darkening gloom of Carlyle's failing health and his brother's approaching death. Verily the "little taper" must have burned luminously in order to lighten such gloom! If the rose-colored reflection of her own developing romance helped dispel the murk, we may be thankful, for things must have been dismal enough at Cheyne Row.

In July, as soon as Carlyle was barely able to travel, they went back to Dumfries to be near the dying brother. Here at the home of her mother Mary was married on August 21st to Alexander. Carlyle was present at the ceremony, apparently in better health and spirits than usual. The bride and groom went to Moffat for a brief honeymoon. Their plan was to return to Cheyne Row and make their home with their uncle, for Mary knew how his comfort and peace of mind depended on her ministry, and did not even consider leaving him. But Carlyle was now

so used to her care that he could not spare his Mary even for a few weeks, and on September 4th he followed the honeymooners. It must indeed have been one of the strangest, most grotesque of honeymoons, for on September 5th, with astonishing lack of tact, Mr. Allingham also joined the party. It now exhibited the odd appendages of an octogenarian uncle and a superfluous friend.

On September 16th, after the death of Dr. John Carlyle, the bride and groom went straight to Cheyne Row with their uncle, now their joint care. The attentions of the nephew seem to have been as devoted as those of the niece, and Alexander fitted with remarkable adaptability into the odd household he had married. On December 4th (Carlyle's birthday), we get a pretty domestic picture from Allingham's diary. He tells us that he and his wife, Ruskin and Browning called and found Carlyle "on his sofa by the window, warm and quiet, wearing a new purple and gold cap". There were gifts of flowers on the table and Mary and Alexander were in devoted attendance.

But the end of their attendance was nearing. In early June Carlyle was seriously ill for several days, and from this attack he never completely recovered. On July 18th, Mary wrote her aunt in Canada a minute account of her uncle's condition:—

"It is not easy to explain to you exactly how Uncle is. He is exceedingly weak, hardly able to walk fifty yards without help. . . . He generally spends his mornings until about half past two o'clock lying on the sofa, reading in his easy chair and smoking an occasional pipe; at half past two he goes out to drive for two or two and a half hours, sleeps on the sofa 'till dinner time (half past six), then after dinner sleeps again, at half past nine has tea, reads or smokes or talks or lies on the sofa 'till bedtime, which is usually about midnight, and so ends the day. . . . His voice is clear and strong, he sees and hears quite well."

There was soon a new interest in this troubled household. During this summer was born Thomas Carlyle, son of Mary and Alexander. There was grave apprehension lest the stir of the baby's coming would disturb Carlyle and its crying be a serious annoyance to the weak, nervous old man. But fortunately the baby was a very quiet one and Carlyle showed great interest in his young namesake. He would sit by its crib for hours, marvelling on this "odd kind of article", and he said with a

gleam of his old humor that it was strange Shakespeare should once have been like that. In more serious mood he would muse: "It was curious—very curious—to contrast the newcomer with the departing guest".

Although it was now midsummer the fast-failing old man had to be encumbered with wraps for his drives, and Alexander, who generally went with him, carried liquid food and stimulant which his uncle constantly required. Then the drives ceased and he became so feeble that he no longer went upstairs, the sitting-room being turned into a bedroom for him. Here, surrounded by mementoes of his wife which he had never allowed to be removed, he spent his eighty-fifth birthday, a birthday which all knew would be his last. On January 1st he took his last drive, accompanied only by Mary. It is comforting to see him lighted to the last by his "little taper". At the very end she was with him. Sometimes he was conscious, oftener delirious, and once as Mary bent over him he murmured; "Ah, Mother, is it you?" The strong mother-spirit of her could tend with equal gentleness the newborn baby and the dying old man.

This last sad picture is, I believe, the one of Mary Aitken Carlyle I love best. But she is to flit once or twice more around the outskirts of her great uncle's memory. On May 5th, 1881, after the publication by Froude of the *Memoirs and Letters*, she sent a letter to the newspapers saying that Froude had suppressed the "solemn adjuration" written at the end of the *Reminiscences*, which she gave. And once again when Froude, stung by the public disapproval of what he had done, added still more by way of 'revelation', and Miss Jewsbury entered the field for notoriety, and such sordid books as *Thomas Carlyle, the Open Secret of His Life*, befouled the English press, Mary Aitken and her husband emerged from their domestic seclusion to defend in quiet and dignified fashion the memory of their great uncle. Having made her defence, simple, clear and "honest as spring water", Mary flits back out of the public gaze, and we lose sight thereafter of this gentle little grey shadow.

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## BYRON'S PLACE IN POETRY

So far as there is any professed rational ground for the present depreciation of Byron, it seems to be based on a reasoning not sound in itself. His detractors are obsessed with an idea that poetry, to be worth anything, or to be classed as poetry at all, must be a kind of mystical adumbration of a thought which cannot be defined in terms of ordinary speech, and which depends for its effect partly on the musical sound of the words themselves (a very important element, be it admitted, in all poetry which aims at permanent vitality), partly by a use of metaphor which suggests a cloud of associated ideas clinging about the central subject, with which they have not always any very obvious connection; leaving the poem a kind of dream-vision in the void of our intelligence—something to be dimly felt but not explained, nor capable of explanation. Now, for short poems in lyrical form there is something to be said for this view of poetry; it is that which is illustrated, more typically than by any other English poet, in many of the shorter poems of Shelley. For long poems it is out of the question: we cannot continue breathing in such a rarified atmosphere. But metaphor is the very breath of life with Shelley in his short, concentrated lyrics; he almost overdid it sometimes; his *Ode to a Skylark* is wrapped around with such a cloud of metaphor and simile that we seem to lose sight of the little songster himself. It is, I suppose, for this reason that Shelley is the idol of the sect of critics referred to; for them poetry is to be something quite apart from actual life, something to carry us away into a region of pure imagination, unsoiled by any contact with the baser earth. It is, apparently, because Byron does not do this, because he is always in contact with actual life, past or present, that to them he is anathema. Byron, it must be admitted, makes very little use of metaphor, which is undoubtedly one of the most powerful engines of poetic expression, although he could use it with great effect sometimes, as in that fine couplet in *Don Juan* where, after observing that persons of outwardly cold manner may be found—

"Beyond all price  
When once you've broken their confounded ice",



he goes on, more seriously, in the next stanza:—

"But, after all, they are a northwest passage  
Unto the glowing India of the soul."

The thought could hardly be put more impressively in two lines. But Byron's poetry never deals with any intellectual problems of thought or expression; what he means to say, whether he says it well or ill, is always perfectly clear and definite in intent and in language; and it is probably on this account that he has the contempt of the worshippers of Shelley, whose lyrics certainly cannot be translated into the simple and definite language of everyday life. Nor do I, for my part, wish Shelley's wonderful lyrics to be any other than what they are; but one must remember, even in considering this class of short poems, that if we are to recognize as important poetry only that which is purely visionary, highly metaphorical in expression, and entirely out of relation to everyday life, that would mean (putting Byron out of the question for the moment) knocking Burns on the head; and we may well feel doubtful about any attitude of criticism which leads to such a result. Poetry, lyrical or other, is not necessarily the better or the more impressive for having no connection with everyday life. Can we get no stirring poetry out of familiar scenes? Take an example from Burns:—

"Go fetch to me a pint o' wine,  
An' fill it in a silver tassie,  
That I may drink, before I go,  
A service to my bonie lassie.  
The boat rocks at the pier of Leith,  
Fu' loud the wind blows frae the ferry,  
The ship rides at the Berwick Law,  
An' I maun leave my bonie Mary.

"The trumpets sound, the banners fly,  
The glittering spears are rankèd ready,  
The shouts o' war are heard afar,  
The battle closes, thick and bloody;  
But it's no the roar o' sea an' shore  
Wad mak me langer wish to tarry,  
Nor shout o' war that's heard afar;  
It's leaving thee, my bonie Mary."

Will anyone deny that that is a successful lyric? And how perfectly simple and direct it is, and what a picture in sights

and sounds—the small boat 'rocking' at the pier, the large ship 'riding' in the distance; the whole scene full of the sound of the wind and the sea, the trumpets and the shouting!

What is it, then, which differentiates real poetry from that which can be classified only as good or bad verse? Coleridge defined Prose as "words in their best order", and Poetry as "the best words in their best order". That is not, of course, a comprehensive definition of Poetry, but it includes a good deal. The essential quality of Poetry depends not so much on what is said as on the way it is said. In Coleridge's phrase, one can be satisfied in poetry with nothing short of the "best" words; not merely words which will do to express the thought, but those which impress us as being the very words required; as if the words were intertwined with the thought and inseparable from it. That is why the best poetry is practically untranslatable into another language; the language itself is part of it. There is also, as Horace suggests in his *Ars Poetica*—that summary of what we may call the eternal common-sense of poetry—the effect to be obtained by sometimes using a word in a new and unexpected sense:—

"Dixeris egregie, notum si callida verbum  
Reddiderit junctura novum."<sup>1</sup>

Now this use of "the best words in their best order" is what really constitutes *style* in poetry; that quality of which the highest example is found in the work of Milton, that great master of the English language as the artistic expression of thought, who never for a moment loses his sense of style. Gray, on a smaller scale, has the same merit, although in a rather more artificial—sometimes too artificial—manner; so has Pope. Tennyson, too, had the faculty of using the best words; so careful was he on this head that we find him, in a late edition, altering a single word in a poem published thirty or forty years earlier, in his anxiety for perfection of language. Byron, on the other hand, had a very impulsive nature, a keen interest in life, and a great facility in writing verse; and he wrote a good deal of verse which

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<sup>1</sup>"You will have written effectively, if an artful combination should turn up an old word with a new meaning."

was not the best that he could have written, which was not prompted so much by strong feeling for his subject as by the sheer enjoyment of the faculty of versifying; and his contemporary readers mistook this facility in verse-writing for poetic inspiration. Byron himself knew better. He says of his Oriental tales—*The Giaour*, *Lara*, *The Corsair*, etc.: "Their faults are those of negligence and not of labour". *The Bride of Abydos* was written in four days, *The Corsair* in ten; and Byron says, with a remarkable honesty of confession for a man of his proud nature, and at that time the spoiled darling of the public: "This shows my own want of judgment in publishing, and the public's in reading, things which cannot have the stamina for permanence". Matthew Arnold thought that he was unjust to himself in this conclusion. "The author of such poems could not but publish them, the public could not but read them." One must remember, too, that the atmosphere of Oriental passion and crime in which these tales are steeped was a totally new thing to the English reading public at the time.

"Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle  
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime?"

The British public of the day certainly did not, and Byron gave them a new sensation. All of these Oriental tales, *The Giaour* especially, contain some splendid passages, but they survive only in virtue of those passages; regarded *en masse* they are careless writing, as the poet himself admitted. But the point which is not fully appreciated, in regard to Byron's poetry, is that he could and did rise into style, and a very noble style, whenever he was strongly moved by his subject. Take *Childe Harold*, which expresses the feelings raised by a succession of scenes viewed or historical incidents recalled, and you can put your finger on all the places where his feelings were strongly moved, by the sudden rising of the verse into a dignity and amplitude of language which does not belong to the intermediate portions, written rather to link up the argument than to express emotion on the part of the writer. To say that there is no very serious or recondite thought behind these finer passages of *Childe Harold* is not much to the purpose. It may be true that, as Goethe

said of him, "when he begins to think he is a child";<sup>2</sup> but in poetry great emotions may serve the purpose as well as great thoughts, while the converse is not the case. Consider Wordsworth's *Excursion*, for example; the first four books, which deal with subjects into which emotion largely enters, contain much fine poetry; the remaining four contain much wise and benevolent thought, and deal with very important subjects, but they really constitute a social and political argument carried on in blank verse, and that is not poetry; the versified form adds nothing to it; it might as well have been expressed in prose.

Byron's first poems, modestly entitled *Hours of Idleness*, published when he was nineteen, are no more remarkable than many other collections of youthful poems; but it is worth noting that Wordsworth, who could hardly have had much sympathy with their style, was generously indignant at the way in which they were treated by the reviewers:—

"Here is a young man who has written a volume of poetry, and these fellows, just because he is a lord, set upon him. The young man will do something, if he goes on as he has begun. But these reviewers seem to think that no one can write poetry unless he lives in a garret."

They must have been considerably startled at the appearance, a year or so later, of *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*; a great deal of it, of course, utterly unfair and exaggerated (as the author fully admitted in after years), but one of the most cutting polemical satires ever penned, the viciousness of which may be excused in a young man who, having been treated as a harmless and innocuous puppy, was determined to show that at all events the creature could bite. The real Byron, however, did not appear till the publication, in 1812, of the first two cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, of which he apparently thought little when composing it; saying to Dallas, who asked him if he brought back nothing from his travels: "A few short pieces, and a lot of Spenserian stanzas, not worth troubling you with;

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<sup>2</sup>Goethe, it must be remembered, was nevertheless an enthusiastic admirer; the bright figure of Euphion in the Second Part of *Faust* was intended to symbolize Byron.

but you are welcome to them". Their immediate success with the public it is easy to understand. In those days of rather limited travel, a poem of descriptions of or reflections on scenes of natural beauty or of historic interest, thrown into one of the most picturesque and effective forms of versification, was something altogether new. Reading these two cantos over again, after the lapse of a good many years, for the purpose of this article, I confess to finding them disappointing in places; flip-pant occasionally; then one suddenly comes across a stanza that makes one forget all that:—

" Yet if, as holiest men have deemed, there be  
A land of souls beyond that sable shore,  
To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee  
And sophist, madly vain of dubious lore;  
How sweet it were in concert to adore  
With those who made our mortal labours light!  
To hear each voice we feared to hear no more,  
Behold each mighty shade revealed to sight,  
The Bactrian, Samian Sage, and all who taught the right."

A common thought enough, certainly, but expressed with great beauty and dignity; and the reference to Zoroaster and Pythagoras in the last line, just avoiding the realism of mere nomenclature, and giving the reader a wider and more visionary outlook, is a touch almost in the manner of Milton. When, in the second part of the Second Canto, Byron comes to the soil of Greece, we find the first evidence of what meets us again and again in the later cantos of the poem—the manner in which the contemplation of any great event in past history infallibly rouses him to his best and highest both in feeling and expression. There is plenty of evidence that Byron, so far from being a mere dilettante in literature, had really a very wide range of reading; the amount of information crammed merely into the Notes to *Childe Harold* is remarkable; their manner is as interesting as their matter; and all the scenes of great historic battles seem to have had a kind of fascination for him. In the preface to the poem he had suggested a kind of moral to be pointed in the very shadowy personality of the imaginary wanderer, viz.,—"that early perversion of mind and morals leads to satiety of past pleasures and disappointment in new ones"—a moral of unimpeachable truth, no



doubt;<sup>3</sup> but by the time he comes to Greece moralizing is altogether forgotten, and the intellectual glories of ancient Greece are celebrated in a series of stanzas of serene beauty, tinged with the melancholy inseparable with the contemplation of vanished greatness:—

"Greece is no lightsome land of social mirth,  
But he whom sadness sootheth may abide,  
And scarce regret the region of his birth,  
When wandering slow by Delphi's sacred side  
Or gazing o'er the plains where Greek and Persian died."

With these lines the second canto should have ended. The six stanzas of more personal reflections which follow are by no means an improvement, and have the effect of being an afterthought.

The third and fourth cantos did not appear until eight years later, but there seems almost a lifetime between these and the first two. There is no more flippancy now; Byron's muse has become serious; and the poetic glamor shed over many a memorable scene or name in past history is for the most part so fine and stirring in its expression that I am at a loss to understand the mental position of those who can regard this as a negligible poem which has had its day. It may be said that these are only reflections suggested by the relics of the past; but they are the reflections of an ardent and well-stored mind, expressed for the most part in fine and musical verse. There are weak places, no doubt—few long poems are without them; about ancient sculpture, for instance, Byron knew no more than the average educated Englishman of his day, and his raptures over the decadent works in the Vatican may arouse a smile now; but there is enough really fine poetry to atone for these lapses. If Byron did not understand much about sculpture and painting, he understood history very well indeed; just as on Greek soil he was fired with the thought of all that Greece had once stood for, so on Italian soil his mind flies back to all the wondrous history of which the peninsula has been the scene:—

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<sup>3</sup> Compare Burns on the same text:—

"But och! it hardens a' within,  
An' petrifies the feeling."

"Italia too, Italia! looking on thee  
Full flashes on the soul the light of ages,  
Since the fierce Carthaginian almost won thee,  
To the last halo of the chiefs and sages  
Who glorify thy consecrated pages";

and he confesses that he turns from the art galleries of Florence to feel more at home "in the defiles fatal to Roman rashness", when on that terrible day by Lake Thrasimene Roman and Carthaginian fought with such desperate fury that an earthquake passed unnoticed by the combatants:—

"The earth to them was as a rolling bark  
That bore them to eternity.

"Far other scene is Thrasimene now;  
Her lake a sheet of silver, and her plain  
Rent by no ravage save the gentle plough."

It is evident from the context that the battle-scene was as real and vivid to Byron's mind as if it had happened the day before. And one lesson which he gives us in this and other passages in *Childe Harold* concerns the spirit in which to regard history; that events which were the turning-points in the history of great men or of great nations are none the less real and the less interesting because they happened two thousand years ago; that history, rightly regarded, is a living drama and not a mere matter of names and dates. This spirit of vivid interest in the records and monuments of the past runs through the whole of the two later books of the poem. The stanzas on Waterloo, with their dramatic beginning—

"Stop! for thy tread is on an empire's dust"—

can probably never lose their interest for Englishmen. At the time they were written the battle was a thing of yesterday, and while he could raise this quite recent event into the region of poetry, he is no less stirring, no less deeply moved, in speaking of the Colosseum, contrasting its now silent galleries with the scenes they once witnessed—the crowded ranks of brutalized holiday-makers looking on at the deaths of the men slaughtered for their amusement; just as he contrasts the calm lake of Thrasimene with the fury of battle that once raged beside it. Everywhere, whether he is dwelling on the monuments and

memories of Venice or of Rome, on the legend of Numa and the nymph Egeria, on the colossal scale of St. Peter's or on the tombs in the Church of Santa Croce—there is evidence of the same intense interest in the heart and meaning of ancient things. Admirable, too, are his passing comments on the great names in Italian literature—on Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto—and his warm indignation at their treatment by their contemporaries:—

“Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar,  
Like Scipio, buried by the upbraiding shore.”

The contemplation of anything great—in human genius, in national history, in landscape or in architectural monuments—strikes fire from Byron's impressionable soul. In referring to Rousseau he imagines the whole landscape steeped in the atmosphere of the *Nouvelle Héloïse*:—

“Clarens, by heavenly feet thy paths are trod,  
Undying Love's, who here ascends a throne  
To which the steps are mountains.

“A populous solitude of bees and birds,  
And fairy-formed and many coloured things,  
Who worship him with notes more sweet than words,  
And innocently open their glad wings  
Fearless and full of life: the gush of springs  
And fall of lofty fountains, and the bend  
Of stirring branches, and the bud which brings  
The swiftest thought of beauty, here extend,  
Mingling, and made by Love, unto one mighty end.”

Then follow, after a stanza or two, the contrasted sketches of Gibbon and Voltaire:—

“Lausanne and Ferney, ye have been the abodes  
Of names which unto you bequeathed a name.”

The stanza on Voltaire is one of the best in the book:—

“The one was fire and fickleness, a child  
Most mutable in wishes, but in mind  
A wit as various—gay, grave, sage, or wild—  
Historian, bard, philosopher, combined;  
He multiplied himself among mankind,  
The Proteus of their talents: but his own  
Breathed most in ridicule—which, as the wind,  
Blew where it listed, laying all things prone—  
Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to shake a throne.”

You could hardly sum up Voltaire better than in those last two lines.

In May, 1818, an entirely new Byron appeared before the world, through the publication of *Beppo: A Venetian Story*. If what may be called *picaresque* poetry is to have a place in literature, *Beppo* is a little masterpiece. As Professor Nichol says of it in his fine biographical and critical essay:—

"It aims at comparatively little, but is perfectly successful in its aim, and unsurpassed for the incisiveness of its sidestrokes, and the courtly ease of a manner that never degenerates into mannerism."

It is much more amusing reading than *Hudibras*, which takes rank as a classic; but of course *Hudibras* is essentially a political and religious satire, while *Beppo* is pure fun; the poet throwing out little shafts of satire right and left at all and everything, but in perfect good humor and with the most audacious rhymes; even his native language does not escape, by comparison with the Italian—"that soft bastard Latin"—

"With syllables which breathe of the sweet south,  
And gentle liquids gliding all so pat in,  
That not a single sentence sounds uncouth,  
Like our harsh northern whistling, grunting guttural,  
That we're obliged to hiss, and spit, and sputter all."

As far as literary style goes, *Beppo* was a kind of preliminary canter for its greater successor, *Don Juan*. A good many people who have never read *Don Juan* probably still believe that it is an immoral poem that ought never to have been written. It is nothing of the sort; it is a moral satire on the vices, follies, and hypocrisies of society, interspread here and there with splendid passages of poetry. The reputation of the legendary Don Juan has probably misled many people as to the real scope of Byron's poem. There is something impressive and tragic about the Don Juan of the legend, as Alfred de Musset has shown in his remarkable poem *Namouna*; and in hearing Mozart's great opera, the queen of operas, one cannot help feeling a certain admiration for Don Giovanni, for his imperturbable courage and light-heartedness, contrasted with the vulgarity

and cowardice of Leporello; an impression also given by Molière's fine and little-read play, *Le Festin de Pierre*. What Byron really did, or at least professed to himself at starting, was to reduce the old Don Juan legend into a satirical chronicle of a similar history in modern life; but this programme is practically dropped out of sight after the first two cantos, and the poem expands into a satire on the social life of his day—"the severest", says Professor Nichol, "as it might be the wholesomest, ever directed against a great nation since the days of Juvenal and Tacitus". It was never finished; it ends abruptly with the sixteenth canto, had it been rounded off to a conclusion it would probably have ended in Don Juan making a society marriage.<sup>4</sup> The seventh and eighth cantos, occupied with the historic event of the taking of Ismail by the Russian troops under Suvaroff, may be regarded as Byron's criticism on war, which, although himself a man of great personal courage, he hated. Whatever critics may say about the want of sincerity in his character, in writing these two cantos he was sincere down to the soles of his boots—too much so to pay much attention to literary finish, for there is a great deal of careless writing in them, interspersed, however, with passages that hit like a sledge-hammer. It was the two first cantos that raised the outcry against the poem—

"Because my publisher declares to me  
Through needles' eyes it easier for a camel is  
To pass, than those two cantos into families."

Canto I is a *chronique scandaleuse*, no doubt, but it is not serious and therefore not immoral; there have been recent novels, accepted by the public, which defend seriously sins which Byron treats merely with contemptuous banter. That he intended to shock people there is no doubt; and why? Because he was disgusted with the hypocrisy of a society at that time flagrantly immoral—how much so we may gather from recently disinterred diaries and 'recollections' of that date—and when a society of this kind practically hounded Byron out of the country he naturally asked himself: Who and what are these people, to give

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<sup>4</sup> Unless, possibly, the poet meant him ultimately to marry the little girl whom he had saved from the sack of Ismail.



themselves airs of virtuous indignation? He flung the plain truth in their faces, and people who had no scruple about breaking the seventh commandment professed to be shocked at being asked to read about it. As to the second canto, after the half-terrible, half-cynical description of the shipwreck (one of the most extraordinary passages in English literature), the rest is only a picture of love in the Golden Age, before marriage settlements were invented; there is nothing sordid about it—far less so, as the poet suggests, than in many a loveless marriage for money. In fact, if Haidee's old ruffian of a father had not come on the scene, there is nothing to suggest that it might not have been a union of lifelong constancy and happiness for the pair. Any idea that *Don Juan* is a poem essentially immoral is put an end to by the fact that in the later cantos, after producing a masterly sketch of Lady Adeline as the handsome, proud, clever and utterly heartless woman of the world (a character more dramatic than any in his so-called dramatic works), Byron deliberately brings in, as a contrast, the pure and noble figure of Aurora Raby (I wish he had given her a better name), the one person in the miscellaneous country-house party who was above all their petty vanities—

"Of the best class, and better than her class

She gazed upon a world she hardly knew  
As seeking not to know it;

The dashing and proud air of Adeline  
Imposed not upon her; she saw her blaze,  
Much as she would have seen a glow-worm shine,  
Then turned unto the stars for loftier rays."

She dominates the whole frivolous and not very saintly company by her calm indifference; and there is at least one moral to be extracted from *Don Juan*—that a young girl of noble character and high principle, brought by circumstances into the whirl and excitement of a pleasure-loving society, may be in it and not of it; may mingle with it outwardly and yet remain quite uncontaminated by it. It may well be emphasized here that nowhere in Byron's poetry will you find anything deliberately said on the side of evil. He may banter when you think he ought to be

serious; but when he is serious it is always, in his poetry, on the side of right, whatever his own life may have been.

With all its literary faults and inequalities—careless writing in many places, and occasional lapses into rather violent and unseemly scolding, *Don Juan* is Byron's greatest work, and one of the most notable literary productions of the nineteenth century. Many lines in it sum up a truth, or a reflection on life, in so forcible a manner, that they have almost passed into proverbs, and are often quoted by those who perhaps hardly know where they come from.

Of Byron's dramatic works little need be said, save that they are essentially undramatic, and represent only the poet's own moods put into the mouths of imaginary speakers. As one critic has observed, they serve to prove, what otherwise might have been thought improbable, that Byron could be dull. *Manfred* has some fine passages, but Manfred, as a character, is only Byron over again. *Cain*, however, does contain a great idea, that of Lucifer taking Cain into the shadowy world of the past, and showing him the beings who had existed before the creation of Man. Dear, generous Sir Walter Scott, as incapable of jealousy as he was of critical insight, seriously thought that in this poem Byron had equalled Milton on his own ground; neither he nor Byron perceived that the greatness of *Paradise Lost* depends not so much on its conception as on its magnificent execution, in which almost every line is a separate study. Byron remarked once to his friend Medwin that "blank verse is the most difficult of all, because every line must be perfect"; one had not stanza-form and rhymes to help one out. Yet here is a poem, supposed to be in that form of verse, and containing some really great ideas, in which there is hardly a good bit of blank verse from beginning to end; it is all spoiled by inferior execution. Of the Tales, two ought to be noted as superior to the rest. *Maseppa* is a spirited account of a terrible experience, and there is another interest connected with it in the fact that it furnished Liszt with the motive for a very remarkable effort in musical symbolism. The other is *The Siege of Corinth*, where there is far more force in the conduct of the story than we find in *The Giaour*, *The Corsair*, *Lara*, and company. Byron

has here got hold of a really powerful situation, the hero (if one can call him so) being a renegade Greek who has joined the Turks to fight against his own countrymen, while at the same time he is in love with the Greek girl whose father is the military commander in Corinth. There is the making of a story in that; there might be the making of a great drama; and it contains many fine passages.

Nor must we forget that, among a good many miscellaneous poems which are not of much account, Byron has produced a few of the finest short lyrics in our language. Two may be especially mentioned as being apparently very little known. One of these (from the *Hebrew Melodies*) is short enough to be quoted in full:—

"Sun of the sleepless! melancholy star,  
Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,  
That show'st the darkness thou can'st not dispel,  
How like art thou to joy remembered well.  
So gleams the past, the light of other days,  
That shines, but warms not with its powerless rays;  
A night-beam Sorrow watcheth to behold,  
Distinct, but distant; clear, but oh! how cold."

In the same collection is another, beginning—

"When coldness wraps this suffering clay,  
Ah! whither strays the immortal mind?"

As a reflection on the idea of the immortality of the soul it is one of the most spiritual little poems ever written, and would very much surprise some readers who share the present popular ideas about Byron.

In estimating an author's place in the literature of his country we are bound to some extent to consider quantity as well as quality. That chivalrous cavalier, Lovelace, left two lyrics which, for nobility of thought and expression, will last as long as English literature lasts; but a man is not an important poet on the strength of two short poems, however excellent. Now Byron has added to our literature, besides a good many short poems of much beauty, and one of the cleverest and most pungent satires ever written (*The Vision of Judgment*) three poems of considerable extent—*Childe Harold*, *Beppo*, and *Don Juan*—

which are consistent wholes and not scraps, and which are all worth reading through. These poems are all English classics; have become so, will remain so, and ought to remain so. And I agree with Matthew Arnold's judgment that Wordsworth and Byron stand together as the two most important figures in the English poetry of their period. At his best Wordsworth is the greater poet of the two; could he have been always at his best he might have shared honors with Milton; but unfortunately his best is but a small proportion of his whole output. Byron's best is not equal to Wordsworth's, but there is a great deal more of it.

A word may be said in conclusion on Byron's personal character, which I think has been unduly depreciated. As to his besetting weakness, or sin (if it is thought necessary to use the word), it might be called perhaps degrading rather than wicked. The standard of immorality, so to speak, was much higher in his day than in ours; he was almost certainly no more loose in his amatory principles and practice than many other men of his day; only he made no secret of it, and lived, moreover, in the fierce light that beats upon a man of genius. As to the mysterious rupture with his wife, of which we shall never know the truth, I have always believed that the fault lay really with Lady Byron and her family. She goes away on a visit to her parents, writes from their house an affectionate wifely letter interspersed with little conjugal jokes, and the next thing he hears is that she is never coming back to him. What had happened between the two dates to account for this? Nothing that we know of in regard to Byron; and his letter to her, asking the meaning of this extraordinary change, is entirely creditable to him—manly and generous in tone; and his emphatic expression, "Let no one persuade you that I don't love you", has the ring of sincerity. He was a generous man in helping others, and I should say would have been a capital fellow to have for a friend, one that could always have been depended upon. Evidently he attached various friends to him very strongly indeed. Fletcher, the valet, was devoted to him; and that a man's servants love him is by no means one of the worst testimonies to his character. Scott, who seems to have rather dreaded a meeting with Byron, expecting to find a man "of

peculiar habits and quick temper", was agreeably surprised to find him "in the highest degree courteous"; "what I liked about him", he added, "was his generosity of spirit as well as of purse, and his utter contempt of [*sic*] all the affectations of literature". On the other hand, when Byron went to meet Wordsworth at dinner, and Lady Byron asked, on his return: "How did the young poet get on with the old one?"—he replied: "To tell you the truth, I had but one feeling from the beginning to the end—that of reverence"; an anecdote equally to the credit of both poets. Byron was a splendid letter-writer; nothing can be more buoyant, picturesque, and witty than his correspondence. Add to all this that he was essentially manly, and of undaunted courage. A remarkable instance is that recorded by an eye-witness and quoted in Professor Nichol's biography, when Byron was ill in bed, and the insubordinate Suliote troops, in splendid attire but covered with dirt, broke into his room brandishing their arms and demanding what they called their 'rights':—

"Lord Byron, electrified by this unexpected act, seemed to recover from his sickness; the more the Suliotes raged, the more his calm courage triumphed. The scene was truly sublime."

Another witness, Count Gamba (also quoted by Nichol), says:—

"Upon trifling occasions he was certainly irritable, but the aspect of danger calmed him in an instant: . . . A more undaunted man in the hour of peril never breathed."

And it was to a task for which courage was the most essential quality that he had devoted himself at the time of his death, when he wrote the words, probably the last verses he ever penned:—

"Tread those reviving passions down,  
Unworthy manhood! unto thee  
Indifferent should the smile or frown  
Of beauty be.

. . . . .  
"Seek out—less often sought than found—  
A soldier's grave, for thee the best;  
Then look around, and choose thy ground,  
And take thy rest."



Three months later he died, and all Greece went into mourning. Among the many misfortunes of his life—not all of them due to his own faults—perhaps the greatest was that he should die just at the moment when he had realized that he might do something to show the world that he was, after all, greater than his poetry.

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## THE JUGOSLAV RENAISSANCE

The Renaissance was essentially a Roman movement, the supreme expression of the Latin spirit in art and literature, but it was too momentous an upheaval in the intellectual life of Europe to remain restrained to the Romanic races, and sooner or later it spread to Scandinavian and Slavonic nations, especially to the lands of the Southern Slavs or Yugoslavs. The literature of the Yugoslav Renaissance stands in direct relation to Italian literature, but depends for its charm on the nature of the purely personal motive by which it is animated. It is in a notable way the expression of the desires not of a nation but of a class, the result of individual needs, individual taste, individual caprice, at a period when the life of the few had become exceedingly rich and complex. It cannot, therefore, appeal to a wide public, and requires, perhaps more than the literature of any other time, a knowledge of the conditions under which it was produced in order to arrive at an appreciation of its excellence.

While the orthodox Serb writers of the Middle Ages were following the paths laid out by the Grecian authors, and among the Croatsians of the west Glagolitic literature was becoming dominated more and more by Catholicism, there grew up among the Yugoslavs of the Adriatic littoral toward the close of the fifteenth century a literary movement which is unique in early Slavonic literature. Formed by particular historic circumstances, a poetical school of remarkable talent budded forth, with its centre at Ragusa and its language the pure popular dialect. During more than two centuries from the fifteenth to the seventeenth this new movement threw its bright rays towards the north, east and south. The history of the South Slav world does not offer anything to compare in intellectual intensity with this phenomenon. The Yugoslavs from Dalmatia took up their residence at Venice. There were a number of ancient Slavic families in that celebrated republic. Politics, commerce and religion drew these two countries together, and made openings for the Italian *Rinascimento* to widen its scope. The science, faith, art, institutions, customs and usages of a polished and

refined society gained a rapid triumph. The results, moreover, were so rich in content that there gradually started under the Latin influence a steady current of production. This movement, known in history as the Revival of Learning, or Renaissance, fired to a high pitch the little Delmatian republic, which seemed only to be awaiting the signal to become the Mecca of Yugoslav intellectual life. The easy communication among the free republics, and the commerce which had developed the wealth of the country and enlarged the mental capacity of the population, were in direct contrast to the despotism and civil wars from which Serbia had been suffering at the time of the Turkish invasion.

# I

Situated on a craggy peninsula, the territory of Dubrovnik (Ragusa) was too small and in part too sterile to provide sufficient foodstuffs for the population. Consequently it was upon trade and industry that the citizens had to depend for their means of livelihood. Trade, both sea-borne and overland, received a great additional impetus from the extension of Venetian traffic and from the increasing civilization of the Slavonic States. At Dubrovnik and also at Venice, Florence and Rome, the aristocracy as well as the middle classes were all interested in trade. We find members of all the noble families in the Ragusan settlements in Serbia and Albania, and no nobleman disdained to travel overseas with his own goods. Members of noble families engaged in trade were constantly making voyages on their own ships, and later they were employed as *scribani*. No one could become a *scribanus* unless he belonged to the Ragusan nobility.

The Ragusan vessels were found in every port of the Mediterranean Sea. Mijatovich, a Serbian historian, asserts that after the fall of the Serbian states, *viz.*, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Regusa traded with America, and that some of its citizens came to power and influence in Spain and Mexico. At Constantinople, the privileges granted by the Comneni were renewed by the Latin emperors Baldwin I and Henry.

Other countries with which Dubrovnik had commercial intercourse were Bulgaria, Serbia and Hungary. In the early

days of the second Bulgarian Empire (twelfth century) the Venetians could not trade with it, as they were supporters of the Latin Empire at Constantinople in withstanding the Bulgarian invasion. The Genoese were equally cut off because the Venetians excluded them from the Bosphorus. The field therefore lay open to the Ragusans alone, and they were favorably received by the Tsar Assen II (1218-1241), who called them his "trusted, beloved guests". With Serbia the Dalmatian trade became extremely active. In 1351, according to the Ragusan historian Serafin Cerva, the Serbian emperor Stefan Dushan established an embassy at Dubrovnik. He founded there a large library filled with Greek and Latin books, and sent capable young men to study literary and humanistic sciences. After three years Dushan himself visited Dubrovnik, and granted to the Ragusans concessions to exploit Serbian mines, which were a source of considerable revenue to the State.

The kings of Serbia (Rascia), beginning with Stefan Urosh I, struck their own coins in imitation of the Venetian ducats, but with no small amount of debased metal, whence Dante's allusion:—

*"E quel di Portogallo, e di Norvegia  
li si conosceranno, e quel di Rascia,  
che male aggiustò il conio di Vinegia. . ."*

"And he of Portugal, and of Norway  
shall be known, and he of Rascia,  
who counterfeited ill the coin of Venice. . ."<sup>1</sup>

Communications between Ragusa and the settlements in the interior were carried on by means of couriers. These couriers carried official correspondence from the Republic to the ambassadors and consuls, and legal notices, writs, reports of judicial proceedings, etc., to the Ragusan traders. They were not allowed to convey private correspondence (which was usually sent by caravan, or in the case of the chief merchants by their own special messengers), save on the return journey. The Ragusan caravans (*turma*) consisted chiefly of horses and were under the charge of Vlach drovers. These Vlachs or Rumans of the Balkans were nearly all shepherds and cattle-drovers, with markedly

<sup>1</sup> *Paradiso*, XIX, vv. 139-141.

nomadic habits. There are hardly any distinctive traces of them to be found now in Dalmatia, save in the name Morlacchi (Maurovlachs) given to the Slavs generally by ignorant Italians of the coast towns. In Albania, however, the Kutso-Vlachs (*Cincari*, *Tsintsari*, or *Zinzari*) are numerous. Their language belongs to the Neo-Latin group and they still ply the trade of wandering merchants and inn-keepers. The time employed by these caravans and messengers was usually ten days from Ragusa to Skoplje, seventeen to Sofia, and twenty-five to Constantinople. The official correspondence to the various representatives in the Near East is preserved in the archives of Dubrovnik in 138 volumes, under the heading of *Lettere e Commissioni di Levante*.

## II

The traffic and trade carried on with the Byzantine, Italian and Slavonic states proved to be a source of great public and private wealth. The Ragusan merchants succeeded in making their port a real emporium of Eastern commerce. Thus they accumulated large fortunes by intelligent management, sagacity and indefatigable industry. The proceeds obtained from the trade and industry were used for the promotion of literature, and the arts of refinement. The literary treasures of ancient Greece and Rome were collected in libraries for public use. The city itself was beautified by the erection of magnificent buildings: churches, museums, and picture-galleries which still attract visitors from every land. Most of these edifices were built in the Byzantine and Gothic styles, but many of them also have original Slavonic features. As the Dalmatians of the maritime cities came into contact with the nations of eastern and western Europe, they imitated first Byzantium and later Italy and Spain. The Byzantine influence in Ragusa, and especially in Serbia, present Jugoslavia, can be traced in art and literature as late as the twelfth century. After that time the Latin civilization prevailed not only in literature but also in architecture, painting, and sculpture.

It is not difficult to explain why the Latin civilization mastered Ragusa. Young Dalmatians went to the neighboring peninsula to finish their studies, and a large number were gathered at the



University of Padua. To Italy penetrated the Western European customs and the works which marked the end of the Middle Ages. Latin literature, which persisted in spite of the protest of the church and its doctrines, had already been cultivated with some success in Dalmatia, where it had become, so to speak, naturalized. There Provençal poetry had been also known for some time—that cult of love-songs and admiration for women or “divine worship of beauty”. An effect of the Renaissance was to reinstate the ancients and to create the inspiration for the study of the classical works. In a word, the literary and scientific influences which operated in Italy were really transferred to the other side of the Adriatic. What Cicero once said about Greek and Latin literature, *artissimo vinculo coniunguntur atque associantur*, may be more true of the Italian and Ragusan literatures. This parallelism between Italian and Dalmatian letters lasted as long as the Dalmatian literature itself endured; it began by considering the works of the ancients, the religion of classical antiquity, and by admiring Boccaccio and Petrarch; it finished by imitating Giambattista Guarini and Metastasio. Dalmatian writers were successful in all the directions towards which the Renaissance had inclined Italy: epic poetry, lyrics and the drama. It was not only exterior conditions of literary development which provoked curious likenesses, but the social position of the writers as well. Authors were accustomed to exercise a certain authority, gathering around them a little group of friends and disciples to infuse with their spirit.

This flowering was in fact a very peculiar and exceedingly odd event. A little republic of some few tens of thousands produced from the end of the fifteenth century a relatively prodigious number of writers and savants, a majority of them of superior merit. Many states, and not the least powerful, would be incapable of producing illuminated books such as these authors illustrated. Although the position which this culture occupied, halfway between Italy and Byzantium, was a very favorable one, that would not suffice to explain fully such a brilliant movement, and it is necessary to reckon with the latent fund of national forces which this literature kept in reserve. The Renaissance, moreover, did not come to Italy alone. The Greeks contributed

a large part to the Revival of Learning. After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Byzantines sought refuge in western countries, and many retired to Dubrovnik. There lived Demetrius Chalcondylas, E. Marulus, J. Lascaris, and others, celebrated over all Europe for their learning. After their arrival, schools for the study of the ancients were established and carried on. Of those Dalmatian students who flocked to the courses of study offered at the schools and universities of the neighboring peninsula, many later became known outside of their country and obtained European reputations. From Dubrovnik came Ivan Stojkovich (1395-1443), one of the most celebrated theologians of the fifteenth century; Ilija Crevich or Cerva (1463-1520), a crowned poet-laureate at the Quirinal in his twenty-second year; Marin Getaldich (1566-1627), the first to effect equations of the fourth degree, also famous on account of his application of algebra to geometry before Descartes; and Rudjer Boshkovich (1711-1787), a noted scientist whose discoveries and remarkable treatises in the fields of astronomy, physics and mathematics procured him a membership in the Royal Society of London.

### ·III

The list of the Ragusan poets and men of letters in the age of *Risorgimento* is long. We shall mention here only those who are regarded in Yugoslav literature as classical. From the fifteenth century the best known authors are Shishko Mentchetich (1457-1527), and George Drzhich (d. 1510), two Ragusan amorists of whom the critics speak as the Dioscuri. Their contemporaries, Marko Marulich (1450-1524), Hanibal Lucich (c. 1485-1553), Mavro Vetranich (1482-1576), and Stepan Gutchetich (fl. 1525), are also lyrists, but beside love-songs they left dramatic and religious productions of high merit. Marulich's epic, *Judith*, was one of the first printed books in the Yugoslav language (1521). Lucich wrote songs and dramas with patriotic tendencies. Vetranich left a collection of mysteries, of which *Posvetilishte Abramovo* (*The Sacrifice of Abraham*) is certainly one of the best Bible-dramas and one of his *chefs-d'œuvre*. His *Putnik* (*Pilgrim*) is somewhat similar to Dante's *Divine Comedy* and

Komensky's *Labyrinth of the World*. Gutchetich composed a parody, *Dervish*, notable for its marvellous force of expression and its novel style, scintillating with all the colors of the East.

The poets who took the lead in the sixteenth century were Andra Tchubranovich (fl. 1535), Nikola Naljeshkovich (1510-1587), Dinko Ranjina (1556-1607), Dinko Zlatarich (1558-1610), Marin Drzhich (c. 1518-1567), Nikola Dimitrovich (d. 1553), and Antun Sasin (d. 1640). Like the Italian artist Benvenuto Cellini, Tchubranovich was originally a goldsmith, but later deserted this craft and betook himself to that of the muses. The most distinctive of his works is the *Jedjupka*, published for the first time in Venice in 1599. According to P. J. Shafarik, a prominent Czechoslovak scholar, the *Jedjupka* is a "splendid flower in the garden of the Yugoslav muses". It was very popular in its time, and was imitated by other writers, but none of the imitations equalled the original. It is composed of seven cantos, in which a Romany woman makes diverse predictions to six young ladies. In the predictions which are made to the third lady and advices given to her we may perceive the portrait of a gypsy fortune-teller:—

"Of all the varied flowers and graces,  
For thee I wish the power of knowing,  
As aid to thee in love-lore growing,  
Thou Spring, fairest of all faces.

"If thou hast the wish, O my crown,  
To be darling of a warrior,  
Let pepper-wort win bachelor,  
Carry it always in thy gown.

"And so he never will go straying,  
To try allure of various maids,  
Nor flirt, nor flatter saucy jades,  
Only thee in truth obeying.

"Hadst thou an ever-urging will  
To retain thy love from parting,  
Wear thy grass charm as a thwarting,  
Which now is known as sweet chervil.

"Like an arrow age comes flying,  
Even to the world's end, lady,  
Bribes are useless, tricks are shady,  
Never halt them by denying.

"If thou'rt bent on tempting fortune,  
O my dear of golden hair,  
Golden-rod is just the fare,  
Beauty will be close in tune.

"A little thinking, I am told,  
But not so much attention fine,  
Will make thy hair in beauty shine,  
A glorious yellow like pure gold.

"O my beauty, O my blonde one,  
Dost thou wish to glow in whiteness,  
Not to lose thy spring and lightness,  
Killwort then thou should'st not shun.

"By my hearth and fireside lowly,  
If thou should'st do as foretold,  
Age will halt its advance bold,  
Youth will stay, by all that's holy.

"As for ending, what more's to say?  
O my dear, my tranquil, proud pet,  
I know all things in wisdom set,  
Save which will be my death's day."

Naljeshkovich was the first to introduce *commedia erudita* and bucolics into Jugoslav literature. His writings are strongly heightened with pastoral and Renaissance fancies, but somewhat languorous and overwrought. Dinko Ranjina is a lyrist of the highest order. His *Pesni* (*Poems*) are enhanced by a refinement and delicacy which are rare qualities among the poets of the fifteenth century. Some of his verses echo the note on which he harped with poignant apophthegm:—

"What is the reason for this, O let them tell me now:  
I made the stove warm for others to bake bread, I trow!  
As everybody knows, and believe me it is true,  
Ship with many rulers has cause indeed to rue.

\*

"In this waggish old world, above all they say,  
You cannot serve two masters in any rightful way,  
It is n't just, indeed, my lady flower-like fair,  
To hold two swords in one hand, that seems hardly square."

\*

Drzhich and Sasin are eminent and ingenious dramatists. In Jugoslav literature Marin Drzhich is often compared to Molière, although he composed his comedies a century before the French classicist. Dimitrovich wrote religious songs and

rhymed epistles addressed to his friends. He spent several years at Alexandria, and while sojourning on that sunny soil of the Medeterranean coast he had time enough to meditate on men, on human affairs, and society in general. His reflections are collected in a small volume entitled *Pritchice (Epigrams)*, in which he portrays various types of people with warmth of feeling and a happy humor. He is flexible and narve, and at times elegant, noble, and penetrating in spite of a simplicity of form. The following are a few of his epigrams and moral sentences:—

"Never horse or donkey will man go a-selling  
Without first approving, by asking or by telling;  
But will take a woman home to be his wife,  
Never once tries testing with whom he'll spend life."

\*

"When you make a promise, tell not lies always,  
Ox is held for horn, and man for what he says."

\*

"When hen and wife go often many trips away,  
One is sometimes stolen, the other goes astray."

\*

"For the pig is proper to pass days in pigsty—  
Not in water clearest can you his legs espy."

\*

In the seventeenth century Yugoslav literature attained its apex. Lyrics, dramas, and epics became more developed than in the preceding century, especially epic poetry. The classical representatives of this period are Ivan Gundulich (1588-1638), Junije Palmotich (1606-1657), and Ivan Bunich (d. 1658). Gundulich is the greatest poet of the Yugoslav littoral and was justly styled *rex Illyrici carminis*. His most original and principal works are *Dubravka*, a pastoral play; and *Osman*, an epic of twenty cantos, a masterpiece which his contemporaries declared immortal. This epos is composed in the Italian style of that time, and is full of vigor, inspiration and beauty. It is the first epopœia which anticipated the idea of unification of the Southern Slavs. The patriotism of the poet finds here its expression in glorification of national heroes and in magnificent descriptions of the romantic Balkan scenery of Kosovo, Marica, Smederevo, and Dubrovnik. Of the latter city he sings:—

"Oh, mayst thou live as now thou dost,  
A-tune with freedom, peaceful town,



Thou castle white, thou heaven's trust,  
Dubrovnik, city of renown! . . .

"Though still within the dragon's mouth,  
To fierce and fiery lions a mate—  
Yet round thee spreads from north to south  
The all-pervading Slavic state.

"Neighbors to thee, the bondsmen are,  
Oppressive violence grinds them all—  
Beyond great powers near or far  
Thou art our freedom's seneschal. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

The supremacy of Gundulich among all the poetic artists of his country is in that subtle fusion of the music and the meaning of language which touches the most secret spring of emotions. He evokes the emotions of reverence and of yearning for a higher spiritual life, and the sense of nobleness in human affairs. These and other qualities of his genius make him by universal acknowledgment the greatest literary artist which Dubrovnik produced. Palmotich left several dramatic works, but most of them are imitations, with a large number of *remaniements* or rehandlings. His *Christiada*, an epic of twenty-four cantos, has in Yugoslav letters about the same claim as Klopstock's *Messias* in German, or Milton's *Paradise Lost* in English literature. Bunich is the author of love songs, several eclogues, and an epic, *Magdalene the Penitent*. His pastorals for the most part express the sentiment inspired by the beauty of human relationships and the world at large. They suggest the charm of Dalmatia, the fresh life of the Ragusan spring, the delicate hues of the wild flowers, and the quiet delight of the pastures and orchards of his native district. *Magdalene the Penitent* and some of his spiritual songs include emotional lyric passages full of the purest religious fervor.

The works of the Yugoslav authors in the Revival of Learning were published in past centuries by private publishers, but since 1869 to our own day by the Yugoslav Academy of Arts and Sciences at Zagreb, in the series *Stari pisci Hrvatski* (*Old Croatian Authors*). This, however, is only a small part of the

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<sup>2</sup>Canto VIII, vv. 569 ff.

earlier South Slavonic literature. Mention of the manuscripts is scattered through various biographies of F. M. Appendini, Saro Crevich (Cerva), Sebastian Dulcius (Dolci), Ignjat Gjorgjich, P. J. Shafarik, and other historians. Many manuscripts have been lost, others are fragmentary, and some are more or less disfigured by corruptions and disarrangement. Thus the restoration and interpretation of the Yugoslav literature in the period of the Renaissance are of peculiar delicacy and difficulty.

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## MORALITY AND HENRY JAMES

When Henry James died in 1916 a few of his admirers prophesied that the American public would be aroused by his death to make a new estimate of his work, an estimate representing more truly his real significance for our national life. The prophecy has gone unfulfilled. It is true that the next year Dr. Sherman published in *On Contemporary Literature* an appreciation written earlier, and that there have been here and there critics who testify to his vitality, but in the main all we continue to hear about him are repeated references to his 'vague-ness', 'obscurity', and the scarcely intelligible subtleties of his later style. The recent publication of a revised edition of Dr. Sherman's temperate critical utterance which contains his tribute to James brings before us again exactly the nature of that analysis. He does not hesitate to put on record his adoration, but it is adoration with discrimination, a love which somehow brings to light a charge that James himself would consider a serious blackening of a novelist's character.

The point about James, he says, is that he interprets all relations and situations and circumstances of life from the æsthetic point of view. There are for him no moral questions nor social nor scientific, only the æsthetic; and that, says Dr. Sherman, "sins against the diversity, the thick rotundity, the unity of life". Our situations and atmosphere and experiences are more than merely beautiful or ugly; they cannot be appraised on one level; and the critical faculty is insulted when it is presented with an attempt so to chronicle them. This is Dr. Sherman's charge, and it is the inevitable result of an enlightened Puritanism so ardent as his. He grants James's service to the Anglo-Saxon race, who so wofully need some exercise to develop their stunted æsthetic sense, but the absence of explicit morality he considers a serious sin on the part of the novelist.

If it were true that Henry James fails to render justice to the presence of the moral sense, as Dr. Sherman says, such a sin would indeed be a grievous one; but the fact is otherwise. It seems to me unjust to demand of James that he bear loud and

vociferous witness to any one aspect of this varied experience. The very essence of his achievement is that there is nothing explicit, but everything implicit in the suppressions of his phrases and clauses; the whole secret of his formula is that he makes a show of nothing save a beautiful performance in the work done; and it is to miss the whole meaning of his work to demand that the moral judgment confront us boldly on every page with the finality of the decalogue. Art can perform a service for morality far other than that secured by pronouncing good or bad on all the acts of men, and that service James perfectly illustrates.

The whole question of morality and art is a dangerous one, particularly for Anglo-Saxons, and it takes wary walking to avoid a sentimental Ruskinism on the one hand, and the excesses of Menckanism on the other. But here also, as in all cases, truth, as well as virtue, is somewhere in between. The *χρῦσεον μέτρον* is as elusive as ever, but equally important is its bearing on our question. We do not, of course, desire to dwell on the obvious, the fact that Dr. Sherman nowhere applies the moral judgment himself to James's work. His whole contention is that James failed to apply it to experience when he came to translate that experience into art. What seems obvious is that the entire body of his work is informed by the very spirit of that judgment. In these days when America is uttering so unmistakable and yet so ineffectual a protest against her commonplaceness and is demanding so insistently some escape, the novels of James enter the most potent plea for the beauty and charm and interest of the moral life.

The proof of such a point is largely a roll-call of his novels, for in most of them he presents the spectacle of an American, nearly always a Puritan, face to face with Gallic or Latin culture, losing to an extent his harshness of manner but keeping his homely virtue; and although James often constitutes himself the apologist of Latin hedonism, he really never can get away from the Anglo-Saxon conception of virtue. Even early in his life, when making a visit to Italy, he writes to his mother about the English: "In the midst of these false and beautiful Italians they glow with the light of the great fact, that after all they love a bath-tub, and they hate a lie".

To begin at the beginning, even so slight a figure as Acton in *The Europeans* is conspicuous and important and charming—the hero, in fact, of the book—just because he is, in our customary moral use of the word, the best man in it. *Roderick Hudson*, certainly a notable advance over *The Europeans* in subtlety of style and conception, presents Rowland the perfect Puritan in the midst of continental standards preserving his love of truth and altruistic ideal of art. James makes of Rowland the reflector through which the reader sees the events and characters of the novel; that is, to the extent to which James ever identifies his own consciousness with that of any of his characters he does so in this case. His mistrust of the omniscient point of view led him always to the selection of some character through whose mind we get the image of events—Rowland in *Roderick Hudson*, Christopher Newman in *The American*, Longmore in *Madame Mauvaise*, Strether in *The Ambassadors*, Maggie Verver in *The Golden Bowl*—and many of these represent Puritan ideals presented very sympathetically.

Rowland is, however, a poor example, because he came before James had reached his maturity; there are better witnesses. Omitting a discussion of the case of Madame Mauvaise in the story that bears her name; the evolution of Newman in *The American*, in which he achieves a high ideal of conduct; the whole thesis of *The Last of the Valerii*, itself a fine justification of Hebraism; the significance of the Ververs in *The Golden Bowl*; pausing merely to mention these, I wish to examine briefly only two cases of James's tribute to morality—that of Isabel Archer in *The Portrait of a Lady*, and that of Lambert Strether in *The Ambassadors*. I select these two because they represent James in his earlier and in his later periods, and because the first is probably his most popular novel and the latter, by his own pronouncement, his best subject.

James says in the Preface to *The Portrait of a Lady* in the New York edition that he wishes to be judged “morally” by the thing by which an artist always wishes to be judged,—the verisimilitude of his work, his faithfulness to his task as a novelist. He insists that—



"One had from an early time, for that matter, the instinct of the right estimate of such values and of its reducing to the inane the dull dispute over the 'immoral' subject and the moral. Recognizing so promptly the one measure of the worth of a given subject, the question about it that, rightly answered, disposes of all other—is it valid, in a word, is it genuine, is it sincere, the result of some direct impression or perception of life?—I had found small edification, mostly, in a critical pretension that had neglected from the first all delineation of ground and all definition of terms. . . . There is, I think, no more nutritive or suggestive truth in this connexion than that of the perfect dependence of the 'moral' sense of a work of art on the amount of felt life concerned in producing it."

'Well', Dr. Sherman would say, 'that is just my contention. Here he is, as I said, reducing morality to æsthetic truth.' My own point is that an artist has the right to demand judgment on precisely that ground, exclusive of any other. But we may go further and find, I think, in *The Portrait of a Lady*, ample refutation of the charge that James himself does not see the moral question in the lives of his characters. He sees it fully, he sees it beautifully. Life for him is not three-fourths conduct but *all* conduct, and the fact that the issue is refined instead of being put in glaring capitals need not obscure it for us. Indeed, we look in vain for ardent wooings and tearful rejections, for pageantried weddings and lustful adulteries; but the question of manners is the question of morals, and for highly civilized people the only one.

The theme of *The Portrait of a Lady* is James's favorite one,—that of a young American girl of the keenest sensibilities and intelligence removed from her American setting and transplanted into the rich and complex Continental civilization. To quote the Preface again, the whole question of the novel is "Well, what will she *do*?" Just exactly what she does justifies my argument. Her sympathies broaden, her intelligence beautifully develops, and, as must inevitably be, her moral sensibilities become keener. She is, at the end of the book, in spite of the influences about her, a 'better' woman than at the first. The meaning of her development is, in fact, this moral growth, for with

James, as with the Greeks, wisdom and virtue are synonymous. The circumstances of her life after her marriage with Gilbert Osmond raise for her a very difficult question; there is until the very last chapter no sharply marked line between good and evil, and yet not to see that Isabel Archer brings to this problem all the power of her sensitive intellect and that she finally is able to find the good even when it is subtly concealed by evil is to miss the whole meaning of the story. The tragedy of her life, day after day, after her marriage to Osmond could never be packed into a narrow act; and neither can her solution of her problem be given an obvious treatment.

The evolution of Lambert Strether in *The Ambassadors* is perhaps the best evidence of all. This development concerns itself, as does that of Isabel Archer, with the effect of Continental civilization on a Puritan American. There must be nowhere in English literature so perfect a representation of the way in which contact with a different culture breaks down prejudice and littleness and allows one to extend and amplify his possibilities for life. Strether comes to Paris to reclaim Chad Newsome from the supposedly immoral life he is leading and to bring him back to America, big business, and virtue. But Paris convinces Strether that loyalty to one's devotion to beauty and the abundant life may outweigh loyalty to a standardized and conventionalized idea of what is good for man. Strether's sympathies enlarge, his prepossessions in favor of material judgment fall away, his consciousness expands to recognize that values infinitely precious can never be appraised by the world's coarse thumb and finger. The result of this is nevertheless to insist again on the Anglo-Saxon virtues. I do not know of a higher tribute to our American product, crude though it often appears, than the chapter in *The Ambassadors* in which James so adequately pictures Strether's reaction to his discovery of Chad's and Madame de Vionnet's relationship. That relationship he had supposed to be of a purely spiritual nature; when it reveals itself as something other, his whole Puritan morality rises up against it and the lie necessary to cover it. He isn't violent in his outbreak—in fact, he makes no outbreak—but the revulsion of feeling is there just the same.

The beauty about *The Ambassadors*, the thing that made James pronounce it his best subject, is the fact that Strether's kind of bargain and his working out of it completely justify the Christian code of ethics. As he clearly sees at various points in his experience, he loses everything by his sacrifice to Chad and gains nothing—except his whole spiritual life, which was promised as the result of that sort of bargain by Christ long ago. It is the complete roundness of his conception of his 'duty' that makes his vindication of virtue significant. And it is his lovable goodness, like that of Mr. Longdon in *The Awkward Age*, that makes its appeal to my affections, just as Mr. Jarn-dyce's similar virtue aroused in childhood my unflinching devotion.

America, it seems to me, so needs James's morality; for it is we ourselves—not the artist—who have relegated it to a mere fraction of our lives. For him it is implicit in all he does. And our conception suffers the limitation our whole culture suffers—it fails to see the value and significance of manners. The moral question for most of us is not presented in clearly outlined sins; it is nearly always a question of manner, and to shut out all such considerations from moral judgment is to attempt an isolation that can never be successful. Nobody so richly interprets as does James the possibilities of the human spirit in its relationships, and it would be well enough to see such relations whole when we view them.

But for all our discussion it is perfectly true that James had unwavering belief that life gets its meaning from the subtilizing power of the imaginative creation. The artist takes human experience and re-forms it so that it can be seen and appraised as a unit; without him it is formless and chaotic; with him it constitutes that real extension of life, the only object of the æsthetic consciousness. And this translation of experience he regards as τὸν κάλλιστον ἐπὶ γὰρ μέλαιναν, the *summum bonum* of human experience, the thing most worth the civilizing process of the ages. About the sanctity and sufficiency of the life of art he has not the smallest doubt. He may sometimes not quite hit the mark of his high calling, a task quite unsurpassed in difficulty, but it is never because of a tepid conception of what that mark is. To the recalcitrant Wells he wrote once:—

"It is art that *makes* life, makes interest and importance for our consideration and application of these things, and I know of no substitute whatever for the force and beauty of its process."

We have spoken of the particular bearing in James's novels of this point on morality, but quite above the perceptive plane there is a supreme service that art can do for morality which is itself hard to define. Unless the moral sense be thoroughly bound up in the sense of the beautiful, as in the case of the Greeks, it can never be wholly sufficient. For instance, it seems to me that the salvation of our rude American society is being very slowly achieved on the appeal of religion and morality only. We would do well to acknowledge and make use of the service of art. At the present time the most potent enemy of materialism is the slowly dawning conviction on the part of business men that it is an outrageously inartistic thing to turn oneself into a money-making machine, that life is miserably proportioned when nine-tenths of its energies never rise above the level of mundane wealth.

And philosophically, as Kant pointed out, art gives the only final impetus to morality. It meliorates the contradictions of life as nothing else in human experience can. The search for truth, the search for goodness go unrewarded; we never reach perfection in either field. But in the æsthetic experience we can realize the perfect moment to which we may say: "*Bleibe, du bist so schön.*" In the perception of beauty we have reason for affirming a meaning to the search for truth and goodness; its realization quickens hope that the effort for morality and knowledge may be rewarded also.

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## THE TEACHING AND USE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN JAPAN

The Japanese language has as yet found no kinship with any known linguistic system, not even with Chinese or Korean. Philology often places it in the somewhat inchoate group of Turanian or Altaian languages, but even with this classification scientists are not all agreed. Whatever may have been its primitive affinities with other languages, they have long been lost and even their traces are hard to discover.

In their early history, when they were still in a low stage of development, the Japanese came under the cultural influence of China. This was about the fourth century A. D., China then being far advanced in the arts of peace, under the famous Tang dynasty. This influence was largely moral, strong in the domain of art and literature, including handicrafts and philosophy, and was exercised without compulsion. It was an instance of an intrinsically higher culture benignantly flowing into the needy lower levels, somewhat like the effects of Greek and Roman civilization on the Gauls and Ligurians, without, however, the local agencies comparable to Marseilles, Narbonne, Lyons, etc.

The first dawn of Japanese literature is, therefore, strongly tinged with Sinicism. Japanese writers adopted and imbibed Chinese ideograms and expressions without much modification. This greatly enriched the vocabulary, but otherwise affected the native language but little. There were practically two linguistic systems in use,—the vernacular, which we will call Yamato (ancient name for Japan), and the Chinese—the one popular and the other erudite. This state of linguistic mixture has continued until the present, and is as advanced as is the mixture of classical words in the English or French languages. But in the case of Japanese there has been the disadvantage that the introduction of Chinese words was affected by Chinese pictographs and ideographs, of which there are several thousands. A curious fact is that in spite of the national consciousness which has steadily marked the development of our people, we scarcely hear of any attempt to free themselves from these Chinese manacles, to



which they themselves have tied their own tongue. Only in the recent generation have schemes been proposed to diminish entirely, or to limit to a certain maximum, Chinese ideographs, and to use in their stead the *Kana*—a syllabary of forty-seven characters invented from Chinese sources by a Japanese—or to use the Roman alphabet.

We may do away with the use of ideographs, but we can ill afford to banish words of Chinese origin, any more than the English can dispense with the Greek derivations.

Japan owes her civilization to China, but the relations between the two countries were chiefly cultural and only slightly commercial or political; hence there was little actual contact between the two peoples in early historical times. The Chinese who came to Japan were few in number, and they were priests, savants or political refugees. The few Japanese who went to China were students. The way Japan learnt from China was through books, hence there was no need of colloquialism. The Japanese pronounced Chinese ideographs in their own way, much as modern scholars pronounce Greek and Latin in a way most likely unintelligible to Sophocles and Cicero. One can easily distinguish *Kango* (literally, Chinese "words of the Han dynasty") from the native Japanese; for the former are almost invariably monosyllabic, while the latter are rarely so. I dare say that the concise character of the monosyllabic terms was the chief temptation on the part of the Japanese to 'swallow them raw' without going to the trouble of translation. It is really written Chinese, or, more exactly, the characters, and not the language proper, that we borrowed from our neighbors. Schopenhauer once said that "one exceedingly conspicuous advantage of Chinese characters" is "that we can use them without understanding Chinese". A Chinese priest, Shen Kung, of the third century A. D., invented an alphabet of sixteen letters, which in the sixth century, under the Liang dynasty, was increased to thirty-six. This system, however, was not introduced into Japan nor did it come into general use in China.

With the introduction of Buddhism in the sixth century, a large number of words of Hindu origin, especially of Sanskrit, filtered into our language, but these are by no means proportion-

ate to the extent to which that religion has spread, because it was through the medium of Chinese translation and Chinese priests that this was accomplished. And even the professional adherents, the priesthood, were not ambitious enough to study Sutras in the original.

A curious feature in phonating the Chinese loan-words, when they are used in Buddhist literature, is that they follow the *Wu* sound (in Japanese *Go-on*), a system of pronunciation in vogue in China in the Wu period; whereas ordinarily *Kango* is pronounced according to the usage of the Han (Japanese—Kan) period.

Thus until the present generation there was practically no foreign language studied orally in Japan. The nearest approach to a foreign tongue was *Kango*, but, as we have seen, even that was so completely absorbed phonetically that the Chinese could not recognize it. They are foreign only in the sense that words of classical origin are foreign in a modern European country. It is roughly calculated that out of some 300,000 words in an English dictionary, only one-tenth of them are of real English origin, the rest being borrowed from different languages. Although I have seen no estimate made of the number of our loan-words, their proportion cannot be much less, since there is no genuine Japanese word which has no equivalent in *Kango*.

Repeated efforts were made by European nations—Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch and English—to obtain a commercial and religious foothold in Japan, but none of them succeeded in keeping up the intercourse for any length of time, except the Dutch. Even in their case, one small factory, confined to a small island, was all the agency at their command. Their influence on our language was for a long period limited to the introduction of a few names of commercial wares of European make. About the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, vague rumors of European encroachment on Asiatic countries reached Japan from the Dutch factory, and a few adventurous spirits dared to acquire fuller knowledge of the West, which could be accomplished by studying the Dutch language. Of particular attraction to them were military tactics, shipbuilding and medicine. As news of the West and of its approach to the

East became more frequent, the study of Dutch grew in importance, and before the middle of the nineteenth century a government school was established under the name of "Institute for the Examination of Barbarian Books". The change in the mental attitude toward Western science is well shown in that of the title of this Academy, which was soon afterwards known as the "Institute for the Examination of Western Books", and soon altered again to the "School of Progress" (*Kaisei*).

Dutch, as is above implied, was the first Western tongue taught in Japan. For some two decades prior to 1854 it was the only one. It was not learned, however, for commercial or social purposes. Neither was it studied for the sake of ideas. It was mastered simply and solely to obtain scientific knowledge, so that nobody cared to write in Dutch, much less to speak it.

At the time of the opening of the country for foreign trade in 1854, Japan found herself without a single citizen who could orally interpret any foreign language. Even with the Chinese we could communicate only in writing. There were several who could read Dutch and a few who had accidentally picked up some English, but none who could speak it. The new régime, however, required the ability to speak a living language, as well as the reading or scientific knowledge of it. The sudden change in the policy of the government brought about unstinted public support of the study of Western languages—particularly of English as the *lingua franca* of commerce in the East; of Russian, because of Russia's ominous vicinity; of French, because of the great military strength of France (it was in the days of Louis Napoleon), as well as because of her famous Code Napoleon; and of German, as being nearest to Dutch and therefore most convenient for medical students.

Schools of every grade and of every variety were founded to teach all these languages; but by far the most popular foreign language sought after by the Japanese was English,—first, because America was the first to open commercial relations; secondly, because the power of England was most felt in the Orient; thirdly, because Anglo-Saxon countries sent out most missionaries and travellers to the East. In fact, ever since 1870 there has scarcely been a school which has not taught English. But even then

students came not so much to learn colloquial English as to get a reading knowledge of it.

The study of foreign language being pursued as a means to other studies, they were naturally relegated to secondary courses of education, and only lately have found a place in the universities and in special schools devoted to them. During a period of about fifteen years (1870-1885) all higher education was given in English, French or German. There were then no trained native teachers and technical terms had not been translated into Japanese. Japanese sciences are not yet developed enough to be self-sustaining. It may be said that no country is entirely independent in the domain of knowledge and research. In the case of Japan this dependence is felt with peculiar force, since on account of distance in space and in language she feels herself very much isolated without it. Research of any kind—even of Japanese philology and history—must call to its aid Western science for comparison and verification. There is more or less fluctuation in the choice of a foreign tongue. French was popular in the military circle until 1871, when its importance began to wane. During the years preceding the proclamation of our Civil Code, French was the chief language in which law was studied. In the early eighties of the last century, at the time of our preparation for a Constitution, there came a sudden change, officially encouraged, in favor of German, and German still continues to be the chief medium for scientific purposes. This tendency has somewhat lessened since the Great War, and French is again becoming popular. But English remains by far the most widespread foreign language in Japan, and although there was a time when it was in danger of being neglected for purposes of higher studies, the rise of American sciences has checked this danger.

As may be inferred, among the numerous schools established for the diffusion of foreign languages, by far the largest number are devoted to the teaching of English. Then follow those for German, and, thirdly, those for French.

The most important is the Government institute called "The Tokyo Foreign Language School", which provides instruction in the following twelve courses, seven Occidental and five Oriental:

English, German, French, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Chinese, Hindustani, Korean, Malayan, Mongolian. To these languages will now be added Siamese and Tamil. Students pursuing any of these courses may enrol themselves in law and literature, trade or colonization, according to the object to which they wish to apply their studies practically. The language lessons proper take from fifteen to twenty hours a week, but, besides these, students have to attend lectures on history, geography, customs, religion and the social and political organization of the people whose languages they learn. This Tokyo Foreign Language School has now about one thousand students and a large staff of foreign professors. A similar institution will shortly be started in Osaka.

Although Government reports so often pass over the subject in silence, it cannot be denied that great work in this line was accomplished by private organizations founded under foreign auspices. They have made good the deficiencies from which public schools have suffered. The Roman Catholic missions have contributed greatly in this respect. It must be granted that their ultimate object is proselytizing, but to all appearance they have carried on educational work detached from religious. One of their schools, the *Gyosei* (Morning Star) Lyceum, is not only the best French teaching institute, but is in many ways a model school. Similarly, the Catholics have established a fine institute, *Seishin* (Sacred Heart) for girls, where, too, the chief foreign language is French. The German Jesuits have started a theological seminary of high standing, where the higher instruction is carried on in German. A school maintained by a Japanese organization called the German Association has a high reputation for its German lessons.

So to institutions where the English language is the chief aim, they are of all grades. Worthy of special notice are institutions established and maintained by the different mission-boards, such as the *Doshisha* (Congregational), *Aoyama Gakuin* (Methodist), *Meiji Gakuin* (Presbyterian), *Rikkyo* (Episcopal), *Kansai* (Southern Methodist). For girls, a private enterprise, the Woman's English School, established by a Japanese and an American lady, has more than justified its name and its object. Another higher school, the Tokyo Woman's Christian College, an



institution controlled jointly by eight Mission Boards, has also a strong English department.

In the Government regulations concerning the curricula of schools, foreign language, which in general acceptance is identified with English—although in higher educated circles the knowledge of English is so common that we scarcely think of it as foreign—may be taught in the higher grades of primary schools in places where such a course is advisable, as, for instance, commercial ports, where foreign trade plays an exceptionally important rôle. In the Middle Schools for boys English is compulsory for six hours a week. Although there is a provision making German or French optional in place of English, this provision is but rarely taken advantage of.

The Middle Schools range in size from a few hundred to a thousand pupils—usually four to six hundred, eight hundred being common. As they cover five years, there are, let us say, one hundred and fifty boys taken each year. They are placed in three divisions, say of fifty each, though usually fewer. In larger schools each class has more than three divisions. Many boys come with some idea of the alphabet and of spelling. As a rule they begin at the very beginning. The teachers are Japanese, a few foreigners being engaged in the higher classes. Altogether there are some three hundred and twenty foreigners employed in our educational institutions, more than half of whom are language-teachers. The Japanese teachers are themselves as a rule graduates of Japanese universities or of special language-schools. By far the largest number have never been abroad, nor even spoken with foreigners. They have little idea of actual life in Europe or America. Their eyes have never seen a foreign home or street; their ears have never heard a foreign voice; their tongue has never succeeded (in a large majority of cases) in distinguishing 'l' from 'r', 'v' from 'b' or 'th' from 'z'; but all the same they amass a surprising amount of knowledge of foreign idioms, ways, manners, history and, above all, ideas. They make no secret of their utter incompetence in oral intercourse; it is not expected of them. In fact, there is a deplorable propensity to boast of colloquial ignorance, which I am inclined to attribute to the traditional belief that language is a medium for

conveying knowledge and that it is not speech, much less a phonation. A foreign language is thus made an exercise of the eyes and not of the ears, least of all the tongue. Its conquests are intellectual and not social. Its best helps are books and worst trials conversation. We treat modern European languages with as much respect and intellectual profit as Europeans treat classical languages. The serious difference in our case, however, is that the languages we study are not yet dead.

Let us now examine the spread of foreign languages, so far as it can be numerically expressed.

There are every year in round numbers 155,000 boys in 330 Middle Schools and some 110,000 girls in 400 Middle Schools. In the ninety-three Normal Schools of the country there are always about 25,000 students of both sexes. Besides, about 800,000 lads in different professional schools have regular English lessons. In the last two decades or so, there have been graduated year after year an average of 22,000 boys and perhaps a larger number of girls from schools of intermediate grade, not to speak of pupils educated in professional schools. If we take further into calculation the number of those who during the past sixty years have entered the portals of institutions where English or some other Western language is taught, the sum will easily reach two millions. This is an enormous number in a country which lies at the edge of the so-called 'Extreme Orient', distant from Anglo-Saxon countries by one-third of the earth's circumference eastward or westward. As an instance of what this means, I may state that there are about four hundred magazines devoted to the interests of foreign tongues.

Another index to the spread of foreign languages may be obtained from the number of Western (European and American) books in our public libraries. To give a few of the more prominent examples:—

	<i>Total No. Vols.</i>	<i>Western Books</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Imperial Library (1921) ....	348,052	82,608	23.7
University of Tokyo .....	695,219	310,356	44.6
University of Kyoto .....	417,428	189,800	45.5
University of Tohoku .....	111,686	29,621	26.2
University of Hokkaido ....	54,143	27,624	51
Keio University .....	94,270	33,400	35.1

The proportion here given is by no means typical for all libraries, especially those in the provinces. Among these, really good libraries may contain perhaps no more than 5 per cent. of foreign books.

The demand for foreign books is so great that reprints, particularly of schoolbooks, are made in large numbers. Periodicals for the purpose of aiding self-study in English and German are issued in various forms and grades. During 1918 there were published in the country, 359 books on foreign languages and 524 magazines; and in 1919, 277 books and 398 magazines.

As to the volume of foreign publications imported into the country, the following statistics will give some idea:—

	1921 Yen	1920 Yen	1919 Yen
Printed books, copy-books, drawing-books and periodicals .....	2,298,000	1,832,000	980,000
China .....	72,000	19,000	11,000
Kwantung Province .....	10,000	8,000	5,000
British India .....	* 4,000	* 1,000	* 3,000
The Straits Settlements .....	* 1,000	* 2,000	
Asiatic Russia .....	2,000		
Philippine Islands .....		1,000	
Great Britain .....	*691,000	*660,000	*545,000
France .....	77,000	40,000	30,000
Germany .....	711,000	353,000	19,000
Belgium .....	15,000	5,000	1,000
Italy .....	2,000	7,000	
Holland .....	26,000	9,000	28,000
Sweden .....	1,000	2,000	1,000
United States of America .....	*638,000	*709,000	*322,000
Canada .....	* 33,000	* 2,000	* 8,000
Argentina .....		1,000	
Hawaii .....		* 1,000	
* Publications in the English language .....	1,367,000	1,376,000	878,000
(These figures are approximate, merely.)	59.5%	75.1%	80.9%

Language is a power not only subtle but formidable. Frederick the Great might reject the 'ape' Voltaire, but so long as he used French he could not escape the philosopher's influence. As by introducing *Kango*, we came under the spell of Chinese mentality in the dawn of our history, so are we now drawn to the West through its tongues.

The linguistic gain is certainly not very great. It is gravely to be doubted whether the large place it occupies in the curricu-

lum of general education can be justified by its 'practical' results. Are we not going to repeat the same process that our forbears adopted with *Kango*? Already through commercial and learned channels, a number of words—perhaps five hundred or so—have dribbled into the vernacular for daily use. Most of these *Yogo* (Western words) are adopted on account of brevity (*e. g.*, *pen*, *ink*, etc.), others for the nuance which can be expressed in Japanese only by circumlocution (*e. g.*, *delicate*, *inspiration*, *business-like*), and still others by their technical precision. Of the last, scientific terms are usually translated, except of course Latin nomenclature; but terms used in sports or in navigation are very often used in the original, which in most cases is English. This, then, is the first result of foreign language teaching—the dissemination of *Yogo*, the use of single words in common parlance with scant respect for pronunciation. The question of its merits is not here under discussion.

English being the foreign language most widely spread among us, there is an Anglophile tendency in our politics, literature, etc. No remedy is so surely antidotal against xenophobia as a foreign language.

I shudder to think what would have been the reaction in Japan to the anti-Japanese agitation of American politicians, if she had not had Anglo-Saxon predilections fostered by language-teaching. But this is only one side of the picture, albeit a very important side. Of far more lasting importance is the cultural value of the acquisition of a foreign tongue. It is largely through the medium of the English language that we are introduced into the thought of other Western—and to some extent Eastern—peoples. We become acquainted with most of the greatest French writers through English translations. The same holds with both Slavic and Scandinavian literature, which are very popular in Japan.

This general diffusion of Western thought affects not only the present but the future of our population. Through the medium of innumerable juvenile publications and kindergarten stories, Grimm and Andersen are changing the mental outlook of the coming generation. The English, the Italian, the Belgian or the Finn are all directing, if not moulding, the mind of the Extreme Orient through *Robinson Crusoe*, *Cuore*, the *Blue Bird*

and the *Surgeon's Stories*. As to the grown-ups, the names of Turgenieff, Tolstoi, Dostoievski, Gorki, Sologub, are as familiar as those of most eminent English and American authors. So too, Ibsen, Björnson, Strindberg, or French writers are, as I have intimated, commonly read in English—Dumas, Daudet, de Maupassant, Anatole France, Bergson. It is by no means infrequent that Buddhist scriptures are studied in English translations.

With all this array of intellectual constellations before them—and I have not given a long list of English, American and German names—is it any wonder that the youth of Japan should be overwhelmed with the feast that the knowledge of foreign language spreads before it?

Foreign languages, if they did not untie the tongue, certainly opened the eyes of our people. Foreign ideas, coming in the form of literature (in other words, in their best form) had the effect of giving an impression of the superiority of foreign civilization. One can imagine the rather disastrous effect on the Renaissance if its Florentine promoters had obtained the knowledge of Hellenic culture by actual contact with the Greeks, and not by reading their ancient classics. An old Chinese proverb says: "Man respects his ears more than his eyes". Ancient things we hear about somehow command more esteem than modern things we see.

If we have committed comparatively few errors in occidentalizing our institutions and customs, it is, I believe, chiefly because Western culture has become most accessible through the instrumentality of its letters. It is the cream of the West that has flowed in on us.

This admiration, not seldom exaggerated, for the West, has exercised another very important moral influence in fostering the international mind, by which I mean here the attitude of mind which enables one to see things from the world point of view. It is not too much to say that perhaps no nation, despite youthful jingoism and occasional reactionary outbursts, is more conscious of her position in the world than Japan; no nation is more introspective or more objectively self-critical.

For the Japanese, the advantages of studying foreign languages are of a higher and more intangible nature than are the so-called



'practical' benefits. In some ways the most valuable advantage lies in its 'unpractical' aspect, namely, in its hidden and unutilitarian effect on the mind. The study of Chinese classics through the medium of *Kango* was as much a mental discipline to Japanese pupils as were Greek and Latin to the European. The age of Chinese classics is gone, and with them the severe disciplinarian. His place is taken now by the English grammar, which with manifold rules and exceptions to rules, with its mysterious orthography and esoteric idioms, exacts of its neophyte the most strenuous use of his reason and memory, together, as has been hinted before, with unbounded admiration for the people who have mastered its intricacies.

Among the many results of the study of foreign languages, there is another disciplinary effect, which, although it is gained as a bye-product, is too valuable to be omitted. It is the intelligent study, leading to research, of the native language itself. The acquisition of a foreign language furnishes a good working knowledge of language in general as a vehicle of thought and opens for the student a portal, hitherto unsuspected, which leads to the treasure-house of his own mother-tongue.

INAZO NITOBÉ.

Geneva, Switzerland.

## SIX LYRICS IN TRANSLATION

### I. THE FLAX

(From the Polish of Marja Konopnicka)

Mother mine, the flax is blowing,  
Blue as summer skies is glowing;  
Soon the weeds we must be clearing  
Round the Cross—my time is nearing . . . Ah! . . .

Let us water it with weeping,  
Leave it to the sunbeams' keeping:  
Let soft zephyrs blow upon it,  
Let the lark drop sweet notes on it . . . Ah! . . .

Pluck it, Mother, some bright even  
Ere the glow has left the heaven.  
Pluck it—ask not if it listeth,  
Pluck it e'en if it resisteth . . . Ah! . . .

With a cord encircling bind it  
As I clasp my sweet—so wind it . . .  
All's in vain!—for God defending  
Soon must I my way be wending! . . . Ah! . . .

Into fair fine linen weave it,  
Whitening in the sunlight leave it . . .  
God! in that strange land how dreary!  
How my heart for home will weary! . . . Ah! . . .

By the cottage threshold sitting  
When the noonday hours are flitting,  
Make a shirt of it—nor spare it—  
Living, dying, I will wear it . . . Ah! . . .

May my heart, if with a bullet  
It is pierced—should God so will it!—  
'Neath a shirt of your own plying  
Of our native flax be lying . . . Ah! . . .

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### II. IN THE SNOW

(From the Polish of Marja Konopnicka)

If I had a silver feather  
In the chilly winter weather

In the meadows I would dip it,  
With the morning frost would tip it  
Where the early sunbeams shiver  
Painting diamond-drops that quiver  
In frozen meadows.

If I had a silver feather  
I would write, in winter weather,  
On the crystals as they glimmer  
Where the frozen waters shimmer,  
Neither flowing, neither whirling,  
Only somewhere deep down purling  
'Neath frozen crystals.

Should I for a winter lay take  
Or the flowers, or the daybreak,  
Or the blueness of the heaven?  
Nay, I need but fields snow-driven.  
Where the frozen pearls are lying  
Bells are tolling for the dying,  
I need tears only.

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### III. I LOVED THEE

(From the Russian of Pushkin)

I loved thee, and perchance it still may be  
That love within me never wholly dies:  
But let it nevermore disquiet thee,  
I would not sadden thee in any wise.

I loved thee without hope, and silently,  
Now scarcely daring, now with fervor's pain.  
I loved thee truly, and as tenderly  
As I pray God thou may'st be loved again.

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### IV. THE SINGER

(From the Russian of Pushkin)

Didst thou hear his voice from out the dark wood borne,  
The singer of thy love and of thy sorrow?  
When the fields hushed at the dawning of the morrow  
The sound of piping, artless and forlorn,  
Didst thou hear?

Didst thou meet him in the shade of the lone grove,  
The singer of thy love and of thy sorrow?  
And didst thou mark his smile? the tear-worn furrow?  
And his gaze, full of sadness, soft with love,  
Didst thou meet?

Didst thou sigh when listening to his music sweet,  
The singer of thy love and of thy sorrow?  
When the fields hushed at the dawning of the morrow  
And when his eye bedimmed thine own did meet  
Didst thou sigh?

—  
V. DUSK AND DAWN

(From the Italian of Dall'Ongaro)

I am the Dusk, you are the Dawn,  
Through both our lives is the twilight drawn,  
But clear and limpid is your light,  
Mine wears the shadow of the night:  
You are sweet hope, elusive, gay,  
And I the memory of a day.

Alas, that our fast-flying feet  
On the same spot can never meet  
In the swift hour that speedeth me  
Uniting hope and memory!  
Alas, for spring forever gone!  
I am the Dusk and you the Dawn.

—  
VI. THE FALLEN OAK

(From the Italian of Pascoli)

There where its shadow fell, the oak doth lie  
Dead—with no tempest's rage disputing now.  
"Behold how great it was!" the people cry.

And here and there upon its topmost bough  
Are many little nests of springtime pending.  
"Behold how good it was!" the people say.

All praise, all cut, and then at the day's ending  
Each bears with him a heavy load away.

A cry is in the air . . . a little tit  
Seeking its nest and never finding it.

ELSIE BYRDE.

Warsaw, Poland.

## A NOTE ON GEORGE MEREDITH

There is no novelist of the nineteenth century quite so interesting to women as George Meredith. He might be called the prophet of woman's revolt from the old order, and the friend who offered the staff of his encouragement to her advance. No later modern—neither Wells, nor Galsworthy, nor Lawrence—has considered women with such comprehensive justice, such gracious admiration. Although Meredith lived in the late Victorian Age, he was not of it; and his credo of feminism, so revolutionary when he advanced it a half-century ago, has now become the commonplace of our daily life. Women have reached the zenith of freedom; without wings they can do no more!

Meredith's crusade began before women had discovered their need—while they were still dolefully sailing in the doldrums. He was, first of all, a poet; and as poets (some of them!) are prophets, his vision made a goal for their advance. His primary concern was not for their civic rights. Relatively, he undoubtedly approved suffrage, but it was a material outgrowth—a sort of popularized propaganda—of what he considered more deeply as a spiritual problem. His study of the psychology of women, far-reaching in its analysis, debated equality of the sexes in the subtle and essential things that make the spiritual drama of life.

A great many men have devoted themselves to the study of women as complex, delightful, puzzling, fascinating creatures—lovely and silly as angels, or bewitchingly guileful as serpents. They are on record in the prose and poetry of the world. But Meredith was a deeper student and a more chivalrous man—two reasons why his novels have had such a definite force and profound influence in shaping the growth of his generation. Some writers—perhaps greater artists—have utterly lacked this power,—this spark that kindles response, this magnetism that creates a following. Hardy, incomparably the greatest literary artist of our age, is as detached in his splendid achievement as the Parthenon frieze. To his view, the irony of life is woven with its beauty to a tragic garland. He makes unforgettable pictures with exquisitely chosen words, but the words are of twilight



color, and his 'weary rivers' find their sad safety in irrevocable seas. Meredith, whose books seem written at top speed by an impulsive pen, was always more anxious about the message of his work than about its style. His enthusiasm and his sincerity are infectious elements. He preaches, he storms—he hurls his text and its application, a good deal in the manner of Carlyle. The years of study spent by both of them in Germany account for Teutonic accents of style, but Meredith's energy of spirit would, in any case, have had an individual emphasis. His voice, in its least utterance, vibrates the earnestness of his philosophy. Nature and truth were always twin deities to him, and the beauty born of their duality held the candle to his game. His pages are set with epigrams like jewels, and beyond their brilliance is the softer gleam of descriptive passages that are lyrical in their beauty.

George Meredith has been called the founder of the English realistic novel. In his work, the novel of manners as presented by Thackeray, and of sentiment as exemplified by Dickens, fused into what might be called the humanity of fiction. Not that he escaped the influence of his great contemporaries altogether. He is reflective of Dickens at a complex angle; and his satire, more subtle, as his humor is more irresponsible, suggests Thackeray. To these great masters who were dead before Meredith's fame was assured, he owed a great deal; to Browning, also, to whom he was spiritually akin. But his debt to these of his generation was atmospheric, and in no way interfered with his own Meredithian essence, an essence that could compound reflected values, and yet be vigorously and splendidly the product of his own compelling personality.

A writer's personality is his supreme challenge. Meredith's is the power that shakes his convictions like banners to the wind. Demanding converts, it is true, but flashing his reasons with such royal gesture, such swift significance of motive and its analysis, that his readers would hardly escape if they could. Combative minds are always interested in theories, even if they do not accept them. Whatever one may think of Meredith's logic in his presentment of the claims of women, or however one may differ with him, his statement of their case never fails to

hold the attention, and for a very simple reason. He created living, breathing women. The heroines of Scott, Dickens, Thackeray (Becky Sharp is the exception that proves the rule) are pale nonentities for the most part—the dash of sugar for the novelist's pudding! Meredith's 'gallant ladies', on the other hand, have the confusing piquancy of pepper in the cream tarts! They are uplifted with the heroic sense of their own valiancy. Barrie, in his exquisite tribute to Meredith at his death, saw these women—Diana, Clara, Sandra, Rhoda, Lucy, Nesta—gathered in an imaginary procession at the funeral at Box Hill; bringing the flowers of their presence to make an immortal garland for his grave.

Meredith's women are never merely romantic incidents in his novels; they are the dominating, vivid forces that animate the play. The famous epigram in *Diana of the Crossways*—"A witty woman is a treasure; a witty beauty is a power"—is typical of Meredith's attitude. And when he says, "I expect woman will be the last thing civilized by man", he isn't in the least cynical. It is his highest form of praise that women still have the primitive force of the jungle, mixed with the illusion of moonbeams and the finely tempered steel of common-sense. He dowers them very highly, and almost convinces the reader that they gallop down the wind of their own volition, and not as stalking-horses for his special theories. Sentiment is not the goal of his adventure, although he does full justice to its complex influence in changing and determining individual character. In *Richard Feverel*, he antedates Freud and his formulas; all the modern analysis of psychology is there—without the morbid decadence of spirit. Meredith's method is as direct, and with as helpful intent as a surgeon's. Lucy, in *Richard Feverel*, is his only Victorian portrait; a girl whose tenderness and charm outwit calculation and wickedness. She is like a small, sweet tune played on a flute, but its persistent purity is the clearest note in the orchestra of the great novel which is generally considered his masterpiece. His other women are more complex—even Carinthia, in *The Amazing Marriage*.

To write of Meredith as a psychologist within brief limits would be an impertinent attempt. No writer in modern En-

glish literature—with the exception of Browning—has received more critical analysis than this master of analytic fiction; in his own country rather than in this—since he has never been popular in fashionable cults of mental exercise. To be a Meredithian, is to confess one's self fond of the complex problems of human life, and to be willing to analyze not only the souls of his people, but our own souls as well. There is keen intellectual reward for those who face his problems, and the radiation of his humanity of purpose is a stimulus all his readers know.

His was essentially a friendly spirit. "The Sword of Common Sense", as he called the Comic Spirit, guarded his way all through life, and his help was quick and ready for any fellow-traveller. His own life offered problems of psychology as puzzling as those of his novels. It was not a happy life—at least, the first half was not; and his reticence of facts has left much to the imagination, as no authentic biography has yet been written. His friend, Edward Clodd, gathered some facts, almost by force, in the last years of Meredith's life, and gave them to the public in the *Fortnightly Review*.

Meredith's father and grandfather were tailors. His grandfather's name was Melchisedec Meredith—and he was the prototype of the famous "Mel" in *Evan Harrington*. He had a shop in Portsmouth, and George Meredith was born over this shop in 1828. Both his father and grandfather were handsome men—a quality fully inherited by Meredith, as the Watts portrait fully proves. His grandfather was a dandy and a dilettante—known to Marryat, who celebrated him in one of his novels. His son, George Meredith's father, added extravagance to his father's qualities, and made what was probably a romantic marriage with a woman above his own class. Meredith, in speaking of his mother to Mr. Clodd, said: "She was of Irish origin; refined, and very witty". She died when her son was five years old, having separated from her husband, who after her death, emigrated to South Africa, and married again. His mother's small fortune, in the hands of trustees, gave Meredith his education, and provided a very slender basis for the study of a profession. His years of schooling in Germany, exercised, as has been said, a formative influence on his style. His analytic habit of thought

was also an undoubted heritage from those early years. These influences were the bit and bridle of a vivid imagination, and a most impulsive temperament. He had need, sooner than most people, for such antidotes to circumstance as philosophy could offer, for his marriage, at twenty-one, to the daughter of Thomas Love Peacock, the brilliant and eccentric novelist, was a most unfortunate one. She was a widow, nine years older than Meredith, and of a personality as complex and as brilliant as some of Meredith's later heroines of fiction. The unhappiness was mutual, and after a few years they separated. In his sequence of sonnets, *Modern Love*, Meredith is supposed to deal with his own case—and hers. For he presents, without prejudice, the side of the woman as well as of the man. No profounder study of unhappy married life has ever been written than this poem. There is bitterness for the man and for the woman in equal measure, and there is sharp and stirring insight of the spiritual content such experience rudely shatters. Meredith lived in the shadow of this episode of marriage for many years. He had great poverty to companion him, and also his little son—the boy he loved so well. During this period, he wrote *Richard Feverel*, a book that takes its place in literature beside *Vanity Fair*, *Adam Bede*, and *The Return of the Native*. It was loudly condemned by Victorian critics as immoral, and excluded from Mudie's. *Richard Feverel*, was followed by *The Egoist*—that flashing rainbow of satire and skill, which to Stevenson and many others marked the highest flight of his genius.

His wife's death finally freed him from his seclusion. He went abroad with his son; later, went to London and made friends. It was in London that he met and married a very sweet and lovable woman with whom he had twenty happy years. There were two children of this marriage—a son and a daughter, who are still living. After his wife's death, he lived on at Box Hill, his charming suburban cottage, writing, receiving his friends, giving kindly counsel and encouragement to literary pilgrims, and cultivating his garden of flowers, until his death in 1909.

His life was a long one. He began writing when Macaulay, Thackeray, Dickens and Tennyson held the entrenched camp of

literature; he saw them pass—their places filled by a band of younger men—Stevenson, Barrie, Kipling. The later and lesser lights of the reactionary and revolutionary period of our own day, were beginning to glimmer in his last years. It would be very interesting to know Meredith's opinion of Mr. Galsworthy's women! Mr. Galsworthy is an undoubted feminist himself, yet he wears his rue with such difference—his women are such pale shadows among the beautiful and poisonous bloom of the words with which he evokes them—that he and Meredith would seem to have little meeting-ground of spirit. Mr. Galsworthy, who has recently said that he writes profoundly to please himself, is to be congratulated on his instinctive conformity to the present emphasis on sex. It has made his books very popular. Meredith was interested in sex as a part of life. He dealt with it in its place—no writer ever realized more that "passion is noble strength on fire"—and went on to other facts and attributes as engrossing—ambition, egotism, selfishness, devotion, courage, the points of light and darkness that make any study of human nature alive to our interest.

That was his great concern—human nature. His psychology had its flaws if judged by the standards of Freud and the other psychoanalysts. Morbidity was not for study and theme. The healthy, elemental atmosphere he demanded for his heroes and heroines was too strong for some delicate spirits; but his ideal women walk to the invisible music of their independence of spirit. Lies, trickery, had no place in the great scheme of Nature. The fine phrase "where there is no vision, the people perish", might have been his motto. Goethe said when dying—"More light!"; Meredith said that during all his life.

His readers must go to Scott or Shakespeare for a parallel to Meredith's inexhaustible riches of imagination, and long gallery of portraits. Many of his novels were built on a basis of fact—as his own story was used in *Modern Love*. *Tragic Comedians* dealt with the romance of Lassalle and Helene von Donniges—idealized, as all who have read the *Memoirs* of the Princess Racowitza will agree. *Diana of the Crossways* (which, by the way, as an attack on marriage from the feminine standpoint, out-dated Ibsen's more vivid drama) capitalizes an incident—the betrayal



of a political secret to the press—in the life of Sheridan's granddaughter, the beautiful Mrs. Norton. It is interesting to remember how Lord Dufferin—the grandson of Mrs. Norton—resented the use of the incident, and was finally able to prove the story untrue. *Evan Harrington* and *Harry Richmond* both have autobiographical interest; and in *The Amazing Marriage*, *One of our Conquerors*, and *Lord Ormont and his Aminta*, the reader discovers clues that just miss being keys, but that lend, nevertheless, a vivid interest to the game of the story.

Always Meredith was an observer—eager, watchful; ready if need arose, to take a hand himself. It was a post always filled in his novels. One recalls the cynical Adrian, in *Richard Feverel*; Vernon, the detached, and philosophic, in *The Egoist*; Dartrey Fenellan, in *One of our Conquerors*. He loved life and found it good, in spite of disappointment and grief and loss. He loved people and believed in them; if they failed him now and then, he understood that he might also, perhaps, fail them. His charity of soul was woven from a wide experience; his philosophy is open-air philosophy—clean and free of miasma; and the poignant conflict of good and evil in his books beats out its measure with a strong wind under starry skies.

MAY HARRIS.

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## SWINBURNE AT WORK

One could hardly hope for a better view of one of the greater English poets at work than is afforded by the collection of Swinburne manuscripts in the Wrenn Library of the University of Texas. This collection contains more than a hundred manuscripts of sonnets, short lyrics, and longer poems of first rank, besides a number of prose pieces. All were bought from Theodore Watts-Dunton, Swinburne's literary executor, during the months following the poet's death in April, 1909, and were carefully selected from the mass of papers found in Swinburne's room at "The Pines", Putney, first, for their inherent importance, and second, for the interesting evidence they give of their author's peculiar methods of composition.

To go through these manuscripts carefully is to watch Swinburne at work through a period of more than forty years—to observe his varying methods, and even the gradual changing of his handwriting. It is to see him shaken with the passionate hate which he breathes into his curse-sonnets against Napoleon III and Carlyle; to hear him singing in a voice of love his admiration for the old Elizabethan dramatists; and to share the exquisite thrills of lyrical inspiration that produced *Hertha* and the love-songs of *Tristram of Lyonesse*. Furthermore, the study of these manuscripts affords some explanation of the greatest occasional faults of his poetry, namely, verboseness, thinness, and lack of logical progression of thought.

The earliest manuscripts are written on white paper, often scraps, in a small, cramped, but plain hand; those of the second period, during which he produced most of his political poems and poems of purpose, are on fine blue foolscap paper, and the writing has become larger, more sprawling, and somewhat careless in appearance. The latest manuscripts closely resemble those of the first group. White paper is again used, and the poet has returned to the dignified, restrained scripts of his youth.

Swinburne's well-known dislike of the physical effort of writing is everywhere evident in these manuscripts; indeed, he never

makes an unnecessary letter. If *thee* is to be changed to *thou*, *-ee* is crossed out and *-ou* is written above; if *what* is to be changed to *which*, *-at* is struck out for *-ich*. In one line of *Off Shore*, *lovelier* is changed to *goodlier* by writing *g* over the first *l*, changing *v* to *o*, and writing *d* over *e*—all this to avoid rewriting *-lier*.

Swinburne seems never to have transcribed a poem. The manuscripts are, for the most part, both first drafts and finished poems, showing interesting changes in the choice of words, structure of lines, sequence of stanzas, and, in a few cases, recastings of the entire plan of the poem.

Some of the manuscripts are in places so scratched and interlined as to seem unintelligible, but a close study always discovers the finished composition, in but a few cases varying by even a single word from the published poem. Some show but a change of a word here and there, while others are perfectly clean. That these last are first drafts rather than transcripts for the publisher is indicated by the absence, in most cases, of titles, signature, and date.

The differences in the appearance of these manuscripts are not to be explained, as might be supposed, by the period at which they were produced, although the corrections do appear to grow fewer during the later periods, but rather to the method of composition, which was itself a reflection of the mood or spirit of the poet. Swinburne's friends speak of his habit of composing his poems in his head, and giving them their final polish before a line was committed to paper. This explains the appearance many of the manuscripts have, of recording verses that have slipped smoothly from his brain, complete and fully polished.

Most of the sonnets belong to this class. The manuscripts show few evidences or none of struggle for proper expression, even those that express the deepest and most violent emotion, such as the tender sonnets written to his literary and political idols; *A Dead King*, whose very writing seems to bristle with hate; or the howl of rage against Tennyson's acceptance of a seat in the House of Lords.

One interesting exception to this general fact is the sonnet called *The Festival of Beatrice*, published in *Astrophel and Other*

*Poems*, which gives abundant evidence of nervous intensity of poetic effort. It is the only manuscript of the collection written in pencil, and is on a poorer quality of paper than any of the others. It has a false start of two cancelled lines, and more than half of the lines show material reconstructing and changing. The whole gives the impression of a tense effort to grasp and embody in words a poetic conception of the imagination before it should vanish.

This manuscript and others of its type reveal a second method of work, which gives a rather clear impression of the "mechanics of the poet's invention". At certain points in his composition he seems to rise to a high degree of intellectual excitement and to be seized with a frenzy of inspiration, which betrays itself in a hurried handwriting, false beginnings of lines, and a nervous groping for the exact word.

An excellent example of the manuscripts produced in this mood is the much-scratched first draft of Tristram's song and the twenty-two following lines from *The Sailing of the Swallow*, the first book of *Tristram of Lyonesse*. This is probably the earliest manuscript in the collection, as Swinburne is known to have been at work on the poem as early as 1858. That this manuscript was a part of the very beginning of the work seems probable, not only from its place near the opening but because of the tentative outline on the back of one sheet. The outline provides for twelve books as follows:—

1. *The Sailing of the Swallow.*
2. *The King's Garden.*
3. *Tristram in Brittany.*
4. *The Maiden Marriage.*
5. *Iseult at Tintagel.*
6. *Tristram and Palamede* (crossed out).  
*The Quest of Palamede.*
7. *Iseult and Guenever.*
8. *The Vigil in Brittany.*
9. *Joyous Gard.*
10. *The Vigil of Iseult aux Blanches Mains* (crossed out).
10. *The Queen's Chamber* (crossed out).

11. *Tristram and Palamede.*

12. *The Sailing of the Swan.*

The epic was published with the nine books and the *Prelude*. *The Queen's Pleasance* was substituted for *The King's Garden*; *The Quest of Palamede* and *Iseult and Guenevere* were omitted; *The Wife's Vigil* was substituted for *The Vigil in Brittany*; and *The Last Pilgrimage* took the place of *Tristram and Palamede*. In short, the Palamede episode was dropped out altogether.

The first two lines of the lyric are clear:—

"The breath between my lips of lips not mine,  
Like spirit in sense that makes pure sense divine",

and then came a struggle for line 3 that was variously written:—

"Transmutes their life as dawn the living sky"  
"Thrills my live soul as dawn the living sky"  
"Melts in them as light molten through the sky"  
"Melts in them as light molten while I lie"  
"Melts with fire as day the living sky."

Finally the accepted line was found:—

"Is as life in them from the living sky."

Line 4 was written—

"As thy touch fills my heart with blood of thine,"—

but was changed to —

"And entering fills my heart with blood of thine."

Line 5 was begun as—

"Love, love is good—"

but was crossed out for an entirely different line—

"And thee with me, while day shall live and die."

Line 9 was first written—

"Even in me at the root of my life is thy death,"—

and was changed to—

"Even one life to be gathered of one death."

From there the poem flows smoothly to lines 18 and 19, which were written—

"And if the tide can leave the deep sea dry  
And thou leave me or I leave thee undone,"—



but were altered to—

“And I from thee with all my lifesprings dry,  
And thou from me with all thine heartbeats done.”

Line 20 was first written—

“Two separate souls, while day shall live and die”—

but was changed to—

“Dead separate souls while,” etc.,—

as if the poet fears to lose some of the ethereal lines before he can get them on paper; and then follows the beautiful passage which seems to come easily and clearly as the song of a bird to its mate:—

“I see my soul within thine eyes, and hear  
My spirit in all thy pulses thrill with fear,  
And in my lips the passion of thee sigh,  
And music of me made in mine own ear.”

The final line of the stanza was much harder. Swinburne tried and rejected four lines before he found the one he wanted and indicated it thus:—

“Am I not thou while,” etc.,—

and hurried breathlessly to the end:—

“Art thou not I as I thy love am thou?  
So let all things pass from us; we are now,  
For all that was and will be, who knows why?  
And all that is and is not, who knows how?  
Who knows? God knows why day should live and die.”

A short stroke of the pen indicates the end of the lyric, and the thread of the story is taken up again. It runs smoothly enough for five lines, after which we find five trials and rejections before he accepts—

“This was the spirit to whom all spirits cleave,”—

and then follow without a break the sixteen exquisite lines which comprise the remainder of the manuscript:—

“For that sweet wonder of the twain made one  
And each one twain, incorporate sun with sun,  
Star with star molten, soul with soul imbued,  
And all the soul's work, all their multitude,  
Made one thought and one vision and one song,

Love—this thing, this, laid hands on her so strong  
 She could not choose but yearn till she could see.  
 So went she musing down her thoughts; but he,  
 Sweet-hearted as a bird that takes the sun  
 With clear strong eyes, and feels the glad god run  
 Bright through his blood and wide rejoicing wings,  
 And opens all himself to heaven and sings,  
 Made her mind light and full of noble mirth  
 With words and songs the gladdest grown on earth,  
 Till she was blithe and high of heart as he."

There are two poems that at first seem to contradict the statement that Swinburne habitually, if not invariably, drafted and finished his poems on the same sheet of paper and at one sitting. The manuscript of *Threnody* (the one to Philip Marston, published in *Astrophel and Other Poems*) contains but two of the nine published stanzas. Yet, curiously, it is one of the very few manuscripts bearing in their own form a statement of completeness, for it has the title, *Threnody*, at the beginning, and the date, "Feby. 20, '87", at the end. *Hertha* has but fourteen of the forty stanzas as the public knows it, arranged in a sequence altogether different from that in which they were published. Unlike *Threnody*, it has neither title nor date, yet its form indicates completeness. It is written on both sides of one sheet of white foolscap paper, in a hand that places its composition at a date considerably earlier than its publication.

The first stanza is perfectly clear, and the rest of the first page shows comparatively few changes, but with the turning of the page we seem to be watching the gyrations of a mental cyclone; the writing is upside down as compared with the other side, the lines are slanting, the script becomes more and more nervous, the scratching and interlining more and more frequent, until the page ends with the last two stanzas in a tangle and jumble impossible to indicate except by photograph. Yet by picking up the uncanceled words and phrases, sometimes separated by several lines of scratches, the reader has the perfect stanzas, just as they were published.

The details of the process by which these originally projected short lyrics were expanded under the poet's imagination into longer poems are vividly exemplified in the manuscript of *Off Shore*. This manuscript indicates that Swinburne's first plan was

to bring the poem to a close after finishing the picture of the quiring sea awaiting the dawn. Stanza 14, concluding this picture, runs to the bottom of page 5, and on the back of this page, written crosswise in two columns, are four stanzas, which form part of the conclusion of the published poem:—

"Be praised and adored of us  
All in accord  
Father and lord of us  
Always adored,

The slayer and the stayer and the harper, the light of us all and our lord.

"Thou wast father of olden  
Times hailed and adored,  
And the sense of thy golden  
Great harp's monochord

Was the joy in the soul of the singer that hailed thee for maker and lord.

"At the sound of thy lyre  
At the touch of thy rod  
Air quickens to fire  
By the foot of thee trod,

The saviour and healer and singer, the living and visible God.

"The years are before thee  
As shadows of thee  
As men that adore thee,  
As cloudlets that flee;

But thou art the God, and thy kingdom is heaven, and thy shrine is the sea."

These stanzas are cancelled by two bold crossed strokes of the pen, and on page 6 are found five stanzas giving the vivid picture of the sea-birds in the face of the storm, ending with—

"At the hush of his word  
In a pause of his breath  
When the waters have heard  
His will that he saith

They stand as a flock penned close in its fold for division of death."

This stanza runs to the bottom of page 6, and here again the poet seems ready to bring the lyric to an end, for on the back of the page, written crossways in two columns, are six other stanzas, which, with those crossed out on the back of page 5, form the conclusion of the published poem:—

"Till the sea's ways darken  
And the God, withdrawn,  
Give ear not or hearken  
If prayer on him fawn

And the sun's self seems but a shadow, the noon as a ghost of the dawn.

"No shadow, but rather  
 God, father of song,  
 Show grace to me, Father  
 God, loved me of long,

That I lose not the light of thy face, that my trust in thee work me not wrong.

"While yet I make forward  
 With face toward thee  
 Not turned yet in shoreward,  
 Be thine upon me ;

Be thy light on my forehead or ever I turn it again from the sea.

"As a kiss on my brow  
 Be the light of thy grace,  
 Be thy glance on me now  
 From the pride of thy place :

As the sign of a sire to a son be the light on my face of thy face.

"Fair father of all  
 In thy ways that have trod,  
 That have risen at thy call,  
 That have thrilled at thy nod,

Arise, shine, lighten upon me, O sun that we see to be God.

"As my soul hath been dutiful  
 Only to thee,  
 Oh God most beautiful,  
 Lighten thou me,

As I swim through the dim long rollers, with eyelids uplift from the sea."

These stanzas, however, in their turn are crossed out, and on page 7 is continued the picture of the sea-birds after the passing of the storm. The last three stanzas of this picture were written in the following order, but rearranged as indicated by the numbers:—

## 2

"Like snow-covered petals  
 Of blossoms that flee  
 From storm that unsettles  
 The flower as the tree

They flutter, a legion of flowers on the wing, through the field of the sea.

## 3

"Through the furrowless field  
 Where the foam-blossoms blow  
 And the secrets are sealed  
 Of their harvest below,

They float in the paths of the sunbeams, as flakes or as blossoms of snow.

## I

"Like flowers upon flowers  
In a festival way  
When hours after hours  
Shed grace on the day

White blossoms like butterflies hover and gleam through the snows of the  
spray."

This arrangement makes a smooth transition into the stanzas crossed out on page 6, which are now written on page 8, and are followed by those cancelled on the back of page 5.

While the manuscripts in question indicate that Swinburne was inclined to expand his poems beyond his first conception, there is no positive evidence from any paper in this collection that he ever rejected a single stanza that had once been committed to paper, although there is one such indication. It occurs in the Second Sonnet of *Pelagius*, one of the loveliest and most powerful of all Swinburne's sonnets. The octet and the sestet are on separate pieces of paper, and differ in kind of pen used, in color of ink, and even in handwriting. The sestet was evidently composed much later than the octet. It would appear that the sonnet was put away for a number of years after it was composed, and that when it was brought out the original sestet was rejected and the present one substituted.

In *Hertha* and *Off Shore* is found an explanation of the curious lack of progression observed in some of Swinburne's finest lyrics—the absence of any fundamental, inherent connection between the stanzas that prompted Mr. Edmund Gosse to write of *Dolores* as "a rosary of stanza-beads on an invisible thread", and to add that the string might be broken and the beads shaken together, and the stanzas arranged in an entirely new sequence without injury to the effect of the poem.

Such poems, unlike the sonnets and the other shorter lyrics, did not come from the poet's brain as wholes, but rather were built up out of highly polished separate stanzas, fitted together somewhat in the fashion of a mosaic. The Wrenn first draft of *Hertha*, while evidently forming a complete poem in Swinburne's mind at the time it was composed, is but a series of pantheistic stanzas that would almost as well fit together in any other order.



It is interesting to note that in the expanded form of the poem as published, the first draft is not incorporated intact, but is broken up, and the old stanzas are distributed among the new ones in the scriptural order of inversion, the last being first and the first last.

This method of poem-building shows even more clearly in *Off Shore*. Somewhere near the middle of the poem, having no connection whatever with that portion, was composed the stanza:—

"Through the subtle and tangible  
Gloom without form,  
Their branches infrangible  
Ever of storm,

Spread softer their sprays than the shoots of the woodland when April is warm."

This was written for safekeeping on the back of page 4 and was later crossed out and inserted as stanza 9, where it forms part of the description of the sea-foliage. On the backs of pages 5 and 6 were written, as mentioned above, the stanzas that make up the conclusion, one of Swinburne's strongest expositions of his pantheism. They, too, however, were shifted about and arranged in a sequence quite different from the order in which they were composed.

The prose manuscripts of Swinburne in this collection, which include *Marriage of Mona Lisa*, the *Essay on James Shirley*, *Notes on the Text of Shelley*, and the *Essay on Blake*, present no such variety of appearance, and offer no such interest as his written verse. They show a somewhat "heavy uniformity", and with the exception of the *Essay on Shirley*, have little to repay critical examination.

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## THE ESSAYS OF C. T. WINCHESTER\*

Lovers of good literature will cordially welcome this volume of essays by the late Professor Winchester. It is the ripe fruit of a scholar and a Christian gentlemen, in the fine old sense, as Charles Lamb would say. It has nothing of the superficial smartness or iconoclasm of much contemporary American criticism. The reader is impressed throughout not only with the breadth and thoroughness of the critic's knowledge, but with the sanity and wisdom of his literary judgments, and with the delightfully rich humanity that pervades every essay. Professor Winchester can be as just to Swift as to Browning, he can as judiciously, if not as enthusiastically, appreciate the age of Queen Anne as the age of Queen Elizabeth. Rarely do we get—at least from America—literary criticism such as this!

Professor Winchester had no sympathy with what he called "the modern cant about art for art's sake." Art as a means "to tickle the senses or to embellish the mere outside of life" was to him not art in the true sense at all. "A great literature", he once said, "must be wise as well as beautiful." His whole approach to the men and times written about in these essays, accordingly, is from the point of view of one who regards literature as an interpretation of the *whole* life of man, on the moral and the spiritual, no less than on the æsthetic, side. It is because of his insistence upon this close relation between literature and life that he is so constantly interested in the man behind the book, and in the age behind the man.

"It is precisely the prerogative of the man of original genius to pass truth and emotions through his own character and issue them with the stamp of his own individuality. Hence, in my judgment, all fruitful literary criticism must take into account the personal character and surroundings of those authors whose work it would explain or estimate."

And even in the case of Shakespeare—the most elusive of great literary personalities—he says:—

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\**An Old Castle and Other Essays.* By C. T. Winchester. Edited by L. B. Gillet. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1922.

"Can anybody conceive it possible that a man should write over thirty great plays and never disclose anything of his own moral and emotional nature, his cast of mind and his habits of observation? . . . I must say that I think one rises from the study of his life and work with something like a sense of personal acquaintance with the man."

He is not content to discuss Pope and Swift and Addison by themselves, he must re-create for himself and his readers the London of their day. And in the title essay (the most delightful of all) this passion for personalities and for backgrounds is seen at its best; for here, in panoramic procession, are the striking figures of a great period,—Leicester, Sidney, Drake, Essex, Raleigh, and the great Queen herself.

Professor Winchester's enthusiasm for literature as an interpretation of life is tempered by a splendid sanity of judgment. One is reminded of what William Dean Howells kept thinking to himself as he listened to Matthew Arnold's lecture on Emerson: "Ah! that is just what I should have liked to say!" There is, in these essays, the breadth of view and the fundamental soundness of the mind, which are the accents of great criticism. Take the following judgment of Ruskin:—

"Ruskin was not a painter or an architect; he was not, we think, primarily a critic of those arts. He was a man of letters. His writing, like all literature, was addressed not to the trained intellect of a class, but to the larger interests of men. It will be measured not by its technical accuracy, but by the volume of perennial truth and emotion it embodies. Now the great service of Ruskin to the world in these early volumes may be summed up in the statement that he taught us, more impressively than any other writer of the generation, the spiritual value of material things. . . . To him beauty is not merely a delightful but a holy thing,—a revelation of the nature of the Infinite, gracious as his love, awful as his law. This is the secret of the strange power of much of his writing. It is suffused with an emotion hardly found before in English prose."

Take, also, the following judgment of Browning:—

"The undeniable attraction which the grotesque had for Browning is explained by the fact that in the grotesque

there is always a certain vigor and strength. It is, so to say, a specific against over-refinement and softness of manner, a proof of that robustness and mass which Browning liked. The truth is, he was so in love with force that he was a little afraid of the soothing effect of grace, of melodious numbers, and rather liked any device that would shock or startle. He had the broad Gothic taste that, under its loveliest arches, high up among the flowing lines, will carve its capitals into quaint and grinning faces."

Or, finally, take this wholesome opinion on the poetry of Queen Anne's time:—

"For my own part I should certainly prefer the poetry of the early nineteenth century to the poetry of the early eighteenth; and yet, in these days when so much stress is laid upon the picturesque, the suggestive or even the mere musical functions of poetry, when Mr. Addington Symonds thinks Shelley has realized the miracle of 'making words altogether detached from any meaning the substance of a new, ethereal music', I say it is not altogether unpleasant to take up this old-fashioned verse whose first charm is clear and pithy meaning."

This just and balanced critical spirit has its roots in a ripe humanism, decidedly religious in temper. Religion, to Professor Winchester, was the major concern of mortals, and he does not try to conceal his own interest in it. It is revealed in his hearty liking of the rough and ready piety of the old Elizabethan sea-dogs. It is revealed in his fine handling of the question, 'Was Shakespeare a religious man?'—

"We may well be slow in pronouncing upon any man's religion; that is a matter between himself and his God. But we may not uncharitably say that in reading Shakespeare's pages we long for one thing, and for one thing only. With this all-embracing knowledge that seems to include almost the whole realm of human nature, could we but have a little faith. If the vision that saw so clearly and justly all the facts of human life could have had some faith in things unseen. Surely of such faith the saintly Cordelia, the noble Hermione, the gentle Desdemona, the Hamlet of Luther's Wittenberg might have known something. But among the very latest words of the great magician who created them

all are these, which sound with a solemn pathos down the centuries,—

‘We are such stuff  
As dreams are made on, and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep.’

He was true to the facts of knowledge only. He showed the human soul as it is; he carried it through all the tangled web of circumstance, the struggles of good and evil, the joys and pains that make up this life of ours here, quite down to the moment when the fevered play is quite played out; ‘the rest is silence’. We need one other book besides Shakespeare; we need our Bible.”

It stands out clearly in his recognition of the religious reverence underlying the terrible misanthropy of Swift, and in his frank acceptance and enjoyment of the robust Christian faith of Browning. But (as it seems to the present reviewer) this refined spiritual tone of the critic is nowhere else heard to better advantage than in the following passage on Ruskin’s gospel of taste:—

“If taste be merely the caprice of personal choice between trivial things—a nice judgment of bric-a-brac—then, indeed, it is no matter to make a gospel of. But if, on the contrary, taste be a wise choice among the pleasures of life, the ability to perceive and enjoy what was divinely intended for our enjoyment, then the difference between good taste and bad taste goes to the very roots of our nature. And it does. Ruskin is quite right when he says, ‘The first, last, and closest trial question to any living creature is, What do you like? Tell me what you like, and I’ll tell you what you are’. It is not so much what a man does that reveals his character—his doing may be determined by convention or constraint; nor yet what he believes—his belief may be mostly matter of accident or inheritance; it is what he enjoys. This decides his ideals and his desires. What, then, can be more clearly a duty than to refine and elevate the tastes of men, to teach them to love the beauty God made to be loved? And if that be, as Ruskin insists, always somehow the type and suggestion of infinite virtue, the love of it will surely cleanse our affections and lift our thoughts. Nay, it will always be true that any perfect vision of it is possible only to the pure in heart who see God.”



The essays, many of them at least, have the conversational tone of the lecturer, with the phrases "you remember", "you know", frequently interjected in modest deference to the audience. For fifty years Professor Winchester was a teacher at Wesleyan University, and there and elsewhere he lectured upon literature—"lasting literature that keeps the intellect strong, the heart young, the imagination fresh and the feelings pure". For fifty years he was to successive generations of young men the opener of the magic doors of English poetry and all poetry. Who that heard him interpret the great poets will ever forget the charm of the speaker—his rich, cultivated voice and his quiet scholarly bearing? But it is not these auditors of old days who will alone be grateful for this volume of essays. Lovers of literature everywhere will extend a welcoming hand to a book that is so loyally and so beautifully true to "the best that has been thought and said in the world".

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## BOOK REVIEWS

AN OLD CASTLE AND OTHER ESSAYS. By Caleb Winchester. Edited by L. B. Gillet. 1922. New York: The Macmillan Company.

In the Introduction to this memorial volume of essays, Henry W. Nevins records his unfortunate experience with teachers. "I remember only one," he says, "who taught me anything interesting—anything vital, anything that touched my life." Although he never knew Professor Winchester, of Wesleyan, as a teacher, he adds his name to that of the unidentified British scholar and concludes: "I can well understand what a radiant experience it must have been for the young to come under his influence". The personal quality of the book is one of its most marked characteristics and one of its greatest charms. Only three of the fourteen papers have ever been printed before; the others are taken directly from the manuscripts of Professor Winchester's public lectures. There is in them, therefore, the tone of the speaker rather than that of the writer, and not merely the informality of the lecture platform but the friendly intimacy of the classroom,—an intimacy which always obtains between a great teacher and his pupils. Yet there is nothing of the carelessness of expression which is too often found in lectures printed without careful revision for the press. Purity and finish mark his style and must have been a vivid and ever-present reminder to his students of what good prose should be. It is no wonder that his former pupils and friends can hear him speak in these pages; it is not difficult for perfect strangers to reconstruct something of the wise, gracious, dignified, preëminently winning personality that is there revealed.

The essays are arranged chronologically, beginning with a group on the Elizabethan period and closing with several on nineteenth-century figures. This causes, perhaps, a weaker ending for the book than might be desired, but the choice of the opening paper, which gives the title to the volume, was most fortunate. In *An Old Castle*, Winchester invites us to Ludlow. He leads us over the great bridge, through the gate, into the inner court, and says: "You are in the Middle Ages". It is

true. By the magic of his words, by the charm of his descriptions,—above all, by the spell of his understanding of the life of earlier days, we are transported to the times of the Wars of the Roses, “the spacious times of great Elizabeth”, and the times of the young Milton. The very graciousness of the style has something of the Elizabethan in it, and we have no difficulty in imagining the writer as the friend of those famous men and women of whom he tells. No better illustration could be given of his method of criticism, that of making the men behind the books live for his hearers and readers. To him, literature was “the best interpreter of life—the life of the individual man and the life of historical periods”. It is unfortunate indeed that no manuscript could be found of his lecture, *An Evening in London a Hundred Years Ago*. The essays that follow *An Old Castle*, those on *As You Like It*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *Shakespeare the Man*, are less notable, yet illuminating and interesting. The same may be said of those on Burns, Ruskin, Clough, and Alcott. The two papers on *The Literature of the Age of Queen Anne* are an example of his ability to see both faults and virtues, and to emphasize the virtues of a period of literature, great and serviceable to the cause of letters, but much despised and maligned. His appreciation of its pithiness, its clarity, and its sanity shows his own sanity. “It is no mean art,” he says, “that can give to a great body of truths, social and moral, a final poetic form, clear, pointed, vigorous.” These two essays, with their sure and admirable summary of the characteristics of the early eighteenth century, should be invaluable to teachers.

One of the best papers in the volume is that on Swift. Professor Winchester's insight into the great Dean's character, the breadth of his interpretation, should go far to lay some of the older evil spirits of Swiftian criticism. Those who love Swift, that “hypocrite reversed”, will be grateful to our author for this picture of the man with his force of character, his imperious personality, his loyalty and devotion to his friends, his innate kindness, his hatred of artificiality, insincerity, and sham. To that other man who hated hypocrisy and sham, but who loved men as Swift never did, Robert Browning, Winchester devotes

two essays full of illuminating criticism. The critic's own love of life draws him naturally to this lover of life. He sums up the characteristics of Browning's work, emphasizing both his poetry and his philosophy. For Professor Winchester demands two things of literature. Great as was his sense of beauty, he liked not at all the idea of art for art's sake. He protests strongly against mere imagery, mere beauty of style, mere literary preciosity. "No really good literature", he says, "was ever born of merely æsthetic impulse." Accordingly, he approves Swift's use of language as a vehicle of thought, the ethical value of Ruskin's writing, the spiritual tonic to be found in the poetry of Browning.

On the whole, this is a valuable book—valuable to the student, the teacher, and the general reader. It is full of new thoughts and viewpoints upon literature. Frequently, to be sure, it says things that have often been said. Yet these old, familiar things are usually put in a new form, or in a brilliant phrase that gives them new significance and permanency. "Ben Jonson", says Winchester, "was Sam Johnson plus Puck." Above all, this book should teach its readers two things, which, we are told, Winchester taught his own pupils,—to know literature and to love it.

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MR. LLOYD GEORGE. By E. T. Raymond. New York: George H. Doran Company. 1922. Pp. 352, with Index.

Success stereotypes the genre. Biography has been thus stereotyped in a new mould, that of the modern analytic school of cold, professional, impartial biographers. Something of Theophrastus and his friends who emulated him in English literature has been carried over into the field of biography. The rut of Strachey has deepened with each successor.

And the publishers have done their part to help along the good cause. The public is recommended to delight in the analysis, in the reduction of the colossus to common brass or still more common clay. And to tickle the palate of the reader with delicious apprehensions of startling exposures, a second

tradition has been growing up, namely, the advertisement of qualities that make each new biography rare if not unique.

The present book is admirable enough of its kind, continuing scrupulously the tradition, even the purple patches where the writer's scalpel digs at man in general instead of at the character upon which he is supposedly operating. But there is nothing too startling, nothing too profound (lest the *bourgeoisie* take offence), just an engaging account of some of the many experiences that lent significance to the life and political career of the great statesman. One who employs what the publishers call "the dissecting knife" may not be able to cry '*Touché!*' as often as he or his public might like; but if a sufficiently able exponent of the 'new school' he will presently have his readers wondering how it ever happened that a man whose character he depicts so cleverly and coolly ever grew to be such a colossal figure, although he will, of course, in due time, endeavor to show how this miracle was effected by internal forces coöperating with blind chance. The author genially takes the reader into his confidence as follows:—

"Some years ago the author, meeting a well-informed American publicist, asked for his real opinion of the late Theodore Roosevelt. To the Englishman Roosevelt seemed a truly great man; was that the view of his informed compatriot? The American took a full half-minute—an unusual time for any American—to arrange his thoughts. Then he said, with a slow impressiveness, 'Yes, Teddy is a big man, a real big man. There's no doubt about that. But—he's the littlest big man I know.'

"In recalling this quaint criticism, the author, of course, in no way associates himself with it. But it may perhaps be invoked to suggest the nature of the difficulties which beset any attempt at a final estimate of David Lloyd George. He is like that genie in the Arabian tale who was now a fire-vomiting giant, now a crowing cock, and anon an almost invisible pomegranate seed. Those who see only one set of facts find in him, to borrow the Gibbonian phrase, 'the awful majesty of a hero', whereas Mr. George is in fact a quite domestic and comfortable person. Those who see only another set of facts are guilty of even greater absurdity in treating him merely as an adroit politician. The present writer is content to state facts as he has seen them and to



draw only such inferences as seem to be justified. For the rest, he merely suggests that history will agree with contemporary opinion, that Mr. George may fairly claim admission to the small company of great, and even very great, British statesmen. But it will probably also place him among those of whom it may be said, as Macaulay said of the elder Pitt, that their greatness was 'not a complete and well-proportioned greatness', and that the drama of their lives, far from presenting the symmetry of a perfect piece of art, is 'a crude though striking piece, a piece abounding in incongruities, a piece without any unity of plan, but redeemed by some noble passages, the effect of which is increased by the tameness or extravagance of what precedes or what follows.' We may at least say that in Mr. George's case a part is greater than the whole, and that, if it were possible, the subtraction of much would make the sum greater. But that, indeed, is merely to state that he is human, or perhaps, a little more human than some others."—(Page 351).

JOHN B. EDWARDS.

Wells College.

DEADLOCK. By Dorothy M. Richardson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1921. Pp. xii, 293.

"'I don't care for novels. . . . I can't see what they are about. They seem to be an endless fuss about nothing.'"

So speaks Miriam Henderson, heroine of Dorothy Richardson's remarkable experiment in fiction. *Deadlock* is the sixth member of a long series, its predecessors being *Pointed Roofs*, *Backwater*, *Honeycomb*, *The Tunnel*, and *Interim*. This remark of Miriam's, however, is casual and impulsive, not judicial. Elsewhere she has expressed the opinion that the true function of the novel is to reveal the soul of the novelist.

Well, yes, granted! But always provided that that soul's insight is sensitive and subtle, its thoughts wise, its imaginings beautiful, its comradeship encouraging; and provided also that the method of its revelation is clear in its diction, harmonious in its movement, and finely organic in the relation of part to part and of part to whole.

It seems to us unreasonable for Mr. Wilson Follett to contend,

as he does in his Foreword to *Deadlock*, that Miss Richardson's work is—

"the first definitive expression . . . of no less a portent than the whole self-tortured modern consciousness, together with the precise idiom in which it does its thinking. . . . She was the first to begin a step beyond the project—carried by Henry James to the ultimate attainable proficiency—of making words define facts *about* consciousness. Her task is to make words embody consciousness itself. . . . The elder fashion, the Henry James method, was to follow the stream of an individual consciousness as it slipped under the bridge whereon one had more or less advantageously perched oneself. Miss Richardson's method is to *be* the slipping stream. She masters her subject, not by analyzing it from a strategic angle, but by achieving complete identity with it throughout."

Mr. Follett's rather superlative defence—for it becomes a defence—seems unreasonable, first, because such a task, even if it could be successfully achieved, would invalidate the art of fiction as an art; and, second, because Miss Richardson does not, in any case, achieve it. It is true that she regards Miriam Henderson's stream of consciousness as giving continuous action and atmosphere to her work; yet because life is less a welter than an extremely complicated series of patterns, whose design it is the artist's business to study, to follow and to communicate, she fails to see that an exhausting one-level diurnality of the trivial and the significant, without emphasis, proportion, or consciously articulated theory of art or of life, does not get us anywhere, but suggests, rather, to use one of Miriam's own phrases, "intel-ligent insanity". Miriam is constantly making discoveries, sometimes brilliant and challenging ones, but they remain mere discoveries. They are not turned to use, assimilated. Indeed, the whole trouble with Miriam lies in the conflict between her hunger for right nutrition and her inability to digest. She lives in and for impressions; that is to say, she lives, if excitingly, yet at random.

Then, too, as regards actual method, although Miss Richardson is greatly interested in "the whole self-tortured modern consciousness", she is far from determining "the precise idiom in which it does its thinking", nor is it possible to ascertain a

thing so changeable and fugitive. Again, the artist in her quarrels frequently with the psychologist, and although frequently defeated knows that the "strategic angle" is necessary for it, that "the slipping stream" is an impossible viewpoint. Miss Richardson's programme—or, at any rate, the programme which Mr. Follett presents as hers—not seldom violates itself by employing the normal methods of dialogue and of detached 'omniscient' narration. It is in these very lapses from her method that the story recovers itself as a story and manages to get itself told.

Miriam's impressions, as we have said, are sometimes brilliant and challenging. Her reactions to certain philosophic questions, and to literary values in Emerson, in Browning, in Lamb (the lyrical quality of whose essay on *The Superannuated Man* she mistakes for social criticism), and in some of the Russians are always interesting. Her thoughts about the differing consciousnesses of men and women, about the French language, about Judaism, about politics, about Americans, about love, are set down with a frank acceptance of their probable importance, if not as parts of a criticism of life, at any rate as essential parts of a long record awaiting final interpretation. Yet many of these thoughts are saved from commonplace only by Miss Richardson's sympathy for words and by the sympathy for Miriam which she asks us to share.

We shall await with interest the further development of Miss Richardson's epical psychologizing, but we cannot persuade ourselves that it will have much real influence on the course of contemporary or future fiction.

G. H. C.

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VIRGIL AND HIS MEANING TO THE WORLD OF TO-DAY. By J. W. Mac-kail. Boston: Marshall Jones Company. 1922. Pp. 150, with Notes and Bibliography.

The series called *Our Debt to Greece and Rome*, edited by Professor George Depue Hadzsits and Professor David Moore Robinson, is already too well known to make it necessary to refer to the means by which these valuable little books are given to the public. In the front of every volume, however, is given a

list of the "contributors to the 'Our Debt to Greece and Rome Fund', whose generosity has made possible the library." The *Ancient Classics for English Readers* series has given much satisfaction to many readers but is not so large in its scope, and recent thought is recognizing a very modern quality in these same 'ancient classics'. It all depends on establishing a more direct contact between ourselves, the American public, and these masterpieces of an earlier civilization and of other speech than ours. Such is what the books of this series set out to do, and every one of them that I have seen so far has admirably succeeded.

Professor Mackail is already known to all lovers of classical literature. His *Latin Literature* is generally recognized as very nearly without a peer. It is more quoted than any other, especially by the others themselves. His appreciative study of Virgil will interest a wider public, students of English and other modern literatures and criticism.

The plan of the book is readily grasped. There are twelve chapters. The first four deal with a definition of poetry and the poet's function as exemplified in Virgil; the world of Virgil, its likeness to our own and its meaning for us; the predecessors of Virgil; and the life of Virgil as the background of his work. His work follows in the next four chapters, which deal with the new Humanism of the *Bucolics* and their influence on European poetry, and touch upon the *Virgiliana*; the *Georgics*, which present a picture of life at peace; then the poet's concentration on the Epic is discussed and a fine presentation is made of the structure of the *Aeneid* as a masterpiece of design and execution. Finally there comes the interpretation, in which emphasis is laid on the permanent and vital human element in Virgil's art, its inspiration in the Italo-Roman ideal which Virgil created and which continues to our day. This is reinforced by a final review of Virgil's impression on the mediaeval and modern world, and by a discussion of the poet's style and diction, and the hexameter that he made his own.

The book is a unity. Quotation would not suffice to give its charm; one cannot quote all of a book. One can only urge that it be widely read.

JOHN B. EDWARDS.

Wells College.

THE POETRY OF JOHN DRYDEN. By Mark Van Doren. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 1920.

This book, the only extended treatment of Dryden in late years, has the virtues of novelty, of real enthusiasm for the subject, of scholarship, and of a clear and readable style. The keynote of the volume is struck in a sentence on the second page of the text: "The story of Dryden's poetry is the story of a sinewy mind attacking bulky materials." The emphasis throughout lies on the energy and the vigor of the poet's mind and work, and on the flexibility and variety of his methods of handling his subject-matter. There are, of course, defects in Dryden's poetry which must be reckoned with; Mr. Van Doren does not fail to consider them and to offer a plausible explanation for their existence. These matters disposed of, he turns to a consideration of the real excellences of Dryden's poetry: an enthusiastic approach to any work and technical dexterity in the performance of it. He warns the reader against expecting of Dryden things that he has not to give. "One must see him as he is: a poet of opinion, a poet of company, a poet of civilization. . . . His great love was the love of speaking fully and with finality; his favorite subjects being personages and books." The reader gets two pictures from this book. There is the picture of the man with his intense interest in contemporary thought, literary, political, philosophical, and scientific, his lack of any strong principles except the principle of loyal adherence to the existing authority, his hatred of change and upheaval. More marked is the impression of the poet, with his metrical energy and skill and variety, his extraordinary adaptability, and his remarkable fecundity. The titles of four of the chapters indicate the various angles from which Mr. Van Doren views his subject: "The Occasional Poet", "The Journalist in Verse", "The Lyric Poet", "The Narrative Poet". As a result of occasional repetition and overlapping of ideas, one does not always get a sharply defined total impression from any one division of the treatment. This is true particularly of the chapter on the Journalist. This fault, however, does not rob the individual criticisms of their point and truth and clarity. The last chapter on the reputation of Dryden is full of interesting information. The statement



that he is, as much as Spenser, a poet for poets, may be startling to the general reader, but a little reflection and a perusal of the final pages of this book will convince him of its truth. Mr. Van Doren does not pretend to touch the dramatic poetry or the critical prose of Dryden; he merely gives here and there a hint of the immense variety of the former and the wealth of interest in the latter. His book should be on the shelves of every college library, for use particularly in connection with survey courses. For it will help by the freshness and enthusiasm of its point of view to counteract the impression that many students get from a fragmentary acquaintance with Dryden. My own experience in teaching Dryden has indicated the truth of Lowell's statement: "You feel that the whole of him is better than any random specimens, though of his best, seem to prove". To the general reader, too, this book should serve as an introduction to a great poet, too little known. All who admire that clear thinker and vigorous writer should be grateful to Mr. Van Doren.

ELIZABETH NITCHIE.

Goucher College.

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JAPAN'S PACIFIC POLICY. By K. K. Kawakami. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 1922. Pp. 380.

This is a study of the situation in the Pacific written for the American reader. The author faces facts frankly and presents his views sincerely. It is but natural that his representation of conditions in China should be colored by his feelings as a Japanese. The Washington Conference, by recognizing so openly the possibility of conflict in the Pacific between American interests and Japanese ambitions and by admitting France and Great Britain to the council, has strengthened each government at home and has relieved Great Britain from the embarrassment that would have been brought about by the termination of her special treaty with Japan. The limitation of armaments has postponed war. This limitation, chiefly of battleships, renders the Panama Canal more useful to the United States, although the concession made by us with regard to fortifications in the Pacific after Japan had already fortified Bonin Island is an advantage

to Japan. Submarines and airships, however, were not included in the Washington Convention, and these would play no small part in the defence of our outlying possessions.

War may be deplored, but hunger does not favor altruism, and war appears less objectionable when the homeland is over-populated and expansion has begun to appear imperative. There can be no question that Japan has exercised great forbearance, even though this may be partly due to economic weakness. Western powers cannot but entertain a high regard for the national honor of Japan; but it may be questioned how long her government can delay the expansion demanded by the pressure of an increasing population. And yet there are economic changes taking place in Japan, and the Japanese of the next generation will not be the same as the samurai-leavened forces that overthrew Russia. The author understands that war would be a calamity to both peoples, whose interests, if China were more united, would be more nearly identical: and this should serve to balance the Young China propaganda to which so many persons in the United States lend a willing ear. Few powers in the world possess the latent strength of that country and there is nothing in the Washington Convention to hamper the expansion of this power nor its expression in military and naval increases once war should be declared. Our Pacific policy has been singularly consistent throughout our history, considering the fact that this is a republic. It seems to be recognized now more and more that, as a people we, too, may anticipate the time when we shall have urgent need of foreign markets for our manufactures and foreign countries from which we may acquire raw materials to maintain our industrial society and give employment to our augmented population. But China is a large country; there are other lands in Asia equally open to Japan and easier for her to exploit or to colonize, and it is to be hoped that the business interests both in Japan and in the United States will work towards a better understanding in the division of their spheres of influence. Since the Washington Convention, the impression prevails in both countries that immediate causes of conflict have been removed; and yet more books like Mr. Kawakami's which will interpret the two peoples to each other

are needed—and, even something more than writing. Manœuvring for economic advantage has often led to war in the end, and it is a distinct gain for peace that now two such great nations have struck hands in friendship and laid aside the immediate means of injuring each other severely. Japan's expansion in cruisers and her fortification of Bonin Island are really guarantees of peace and it is perhaps not a bad thing that the American people should come to understand that the Philippines have thus been pledged to peace, as it were, little as the jingoists may enjoy this restriction upon their chauvinistic eloquence.

J. B. EDWARDS.

Wells College.

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TYPES OF ENGLISH DRAMA, 1660-1780. By David Harrison Stevens.  
Boston: Ginn and Company. 1923. Pp. 920.

The publication of a new collection of seventeenth and eighteenth-century plays at once raises the question of how the new book differs from the one already in the field, namely Tupper's *Representative English Dramas* (Oxford, 1914). To make a brief comparison of the two may serve perhaps as the most useful criticism of Dr. Stevens's collection. Unfortunately in both cases the title of the book is a misnomer, as it pretends to an inclusiveness which is not fulfilled, and which is not modified until one passes from the cover to the title-page. As to the content, Dr. Stevens's book has about twice the number of pages, but as the paper is thin the book does not bulk large. Besides containing all the plays in Tupper, with the single exception of *The Conquest of Granada* (for which *Aurengzebe* is substituted), it includes ten additional plays. Of these the most welcome to the student of the drama are: *The Rehearsal*, *Bury Fair*, *Jane Shore*, *The London Merchant*, and Sheridan's *The Critic*. The enlargement is thus accounted for mainly by the addition of eighteenth-century plays; some students have expressed a preference for a few more plays of the preceding century. In the notes, which are somewhat more niggardly than in Tupper, yet adequate, Dr. Stevens has happily introduced the score of all the airs from the *Beggar's Opera*. Aside from the fact that Dr.

Stevens's collection of plays is the larger, and therefore more serviceable, it will doubtless receive an additional welcome from students because it does not have the fat type which made the reading of the plays in Tupper particularly trying to the eyes.

ERNEST E. LEISY.

Illinois Wesleyan University.

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STUDIES IN ENGLISH-WORLD LITERATURE. By Ottis Bedney Sperlin. The Century Studies in Literature for High Schools. New York: The Century Co. 1923. 20.8 cm., pp. xxxii, 19 illustrations, 526.

The best that can be said about this eleventh-grade book is that the selection of poetry is, on the whole, good. Of the prose not so much can be said. Of Burke's great speech only fourteen paragraphs are given, and these are far from being the most significant. Macaulay's Copyright Speech, of which a good deal is given, is distinctly inferior to Burke both in quality and in importance. When it comes to the editor's comments on the selections, we wonder what they are meant to do. Do they take the place of the teacher? And if so, what is the latter to do? Some of them are curious. On page 474 the student is asked: "What is your opinion of Burke's judgment in the matter?" Is the student who has read only fourteen paragraphs of Burke's speech qualified to have an opinion of Burke's judgment about the right treatment of America? On page 19 we read this: "Professor C. Alphonso Smith, in his book entitled *What Can Literature Do for Me?* asks why Lincoln's Gettysburg Speech is literature and why Edward Everett's two-hour speech on the same occasion is not literature. Most likely Everett's speech is not obtainable in your library; nevertheless, attempt to answer the question as best you can; then have one of the class report on Professor Smith's answer." So we are to teach pupils to criticize writing (even if it is not literature) without even having seen it!

In the interest of good teaching let us keep our students from such cut-and-dried work and such snap judgments as the use of this book will encourage.

CLARK S. NORTHUP.

Cornell University.

A PILGRIM HARP. By Joseph Herbert Bean. Boston: The Stratford Company. 1923. Pp. 131.

This is an unpretentious volume. It has none of the emotional and pseudo-æsthetic disturbance that marks too many books of recent verse. Here are the accepted metres and the usual diction. Here is sincerity, even where the art falters. Just as the occasions which called forth the ninety-six pieces composing this collection were greatly varied, so their poetic quality is very uneven. Indeed, ninety-six really successful efforts would be a *tour de force* hardly to be looked for in a first volume. They average well, however. *No Room in the Inn* and *A Mountain Cabin* pleased the reviewer most. Some lyric virtue appears in *Limpid Lyres*, and one likes the boldness of the opening lines of *Space's Bridal*.

Some of these poems seem to be merely metrical exercises; none is written to advance an æsthetic creed. Some are intended for children, and others will bring comfort to the aged. The mountains are here, the neighbors, the town, the scenes of home and the interests of friends. A number of the poems give the author's reaction to events of the Great War; others are kindled with religious fervor. Many books of verse have appeared during the last few years that are inferior by far.

A second volume is to be looked for. The author, who composed these lyrics in the rare moments of leisure in a very busy life, can hardly stop with this one book of verse.

J. B. EDWARDS.

Wells College.

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A SON OF THE MIDDLE BORDER. By Hamlin Garland. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1917, reprinted 1922.

A DAUGHTER OF THE MIDDLE BORDER. By Hamlin Garland. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1922.

The two companion volumes constitute the epic of the Middle West. Their hearty, sane, wholesome outlook well becomes the theme. That they are so largely autobiographical adds to their power, proves them authentic. In certain other books the manner of the first person may repel, but in these we catch more than a glimpse of that great and stirring chapter in our national history,



that story of the Middle West which is now receding into the glamor of the past, and this simple and effective manner of presentation sums up the experiences of a single group seen through the eyes (one might say, the heart) of one member of that well-worth while company. Truth demands that for the picture's sake the author write of one he knew well, and whom could he know so well as himself, of whom he writes so unpretentiously? But women as well as men will read this epic and they have well earned their place in such annals; the companion narrative which rounds out the epic is thus written about the author's wife. Mr. Garland takes the reader not only into his confidence but into hers—and that, as you might fancy, requires art as well as sympathy. After reading of their lives and such of their thoughts, ideals, and experiences as the record privileges us to learn, we feel as if we knew the characters well and wish that we knew them better. The sincerity of the style answers to that of their lives and makes these two narratives a living as well as an authentic historical document whose vitality derives from truth. One reads the book with pride as well as interest. Such books attest the soundness of our people and possess a double value to the reader.

J. B. EDWARDS.

Wells College.

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THIS FREEDOM. By A. S. M. Hutchinson. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 1922.

Women are free to-day, free to live their own lives, or rather to choose and follow their own careers,—but maternal functions are maternal functions. Otherwise this book could not have been written; for right here is the possible tragedy. The heroine, Rosalie Aubyn, selects her career, a business career, and makes a success of it beyond even her fondest expectations. Beyond her expectations also she is loved, loves in turn, marries and tries to continue her career. There are children, as often happens in happy marriages, and this her marriage assuredly is. The children miss their mother, whose business obligations keep her apart from them. Nurses and governesses cannot supply this lack; the family, although prosperous, for the husband is success-

ful, too, in his profession, does not have a real home. This tells on the children, first on their characters and then on their lives. When Rosalie finally does come home it is too late for Hugh, the eldest son, and for Dora, the daughter; they had never known their mother and were out of sympathy with her. The death of "Benji", her youngest child, is the final calamity that makes her decide to "come home", which means giving up her career to resume her function. Hugh's child is there, for her to bless with her awakened maternal love and a sense of responsibility rendered keen by experience, and here the story closes.

The story is interesting, well written, but not altogether convincing. Although a trifle overdrawn, there is truth in the author's argument.

J. B. E.

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THE STEP ON THE STAIR. By Anna Katharine Green. New York: Dood, Mead and Co. 1923. 19.3 cm., pp. iv, 380.

While Mrs. Rohlf's does not quite come up to the success achieved by her *Leavenworth Case*, she has written a good story, in which there is some not unskillful character delineation. The plot is pure romance. A wealthy man, determining to leave his wealth to his future son-in-law, one of two namesake nephews, has made three wills, and presently dies from poisoning. The ferreting out of the guilty person takes some time, and forms the staple of the story. Not enough is made of the supernatural element to give warrant for naming the story thus. The love story formed a knotty problem, and some will say it is not altogether well handled.

CLARK S. NORTHUP.

Cornell University.

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HAPPY RASCALS. By F. Morton Howard. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 1922.

This book is a collection of short stories about some jolly mariners, the crews of the two coastwise schooners who engage in a rivalry of rough pleasantries. The characters are comical and cheery (so the publishers' notice says), but short stories which may serve well enough to relieve the tedium of the pro-

gramme of the monthly magazine are not always a success when served up *en masse* in a book. Such a book ought to survive the test of being read aloud; but we tried and failed. The audience agreed in stopping in the middle of the first story. W. W. Jacobs and several other writers whose names I have cheerfully forgotten could do this sort of thing much better.

J. B. E.

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ONCE ABOARD THE LUGGER. By A. S. M. Hutchinson. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 1922.

Whatever manner of telling a story an author may select is the right manner if only it be interesting. To some of his readers Mr. Hutchinson has seemed to take himself and his characters too seriously; his manner is consequently regarded as too sentimental—in *When Winter Comes*, for example. But in this book there is a series of asides to the reader in which the author with the most genial humor shows just how seriously his characters and their adventures are to be taken. The story is a really good one, and the style is alluring.

J. B. E.